To wander throughout the nine islands of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is the essence of all opulences, the essence of all religious principles, the essence of all bhajana, the essence of all perfections, the essence of all glories and the essence of all oceans of sweetness.

from Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī's
Śrī Navadvīpa-śatakam

ISBN 81-86737-56-1
9 788186 737569 90000>

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

GAUDIYA VEDANTA PUBLICATIONS
GVP

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

and the Prominent Holy Places of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja



Murśidābāda
Rājaśāhī
Jhārikhaṇḍa
Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa
Śrīmatī Hemalatā Ṭhākurāṇī
Śrī Harirāma Ācārya Prabhu
Mahārāja Śrī Manīndracandra Nandī
Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu
Śrī Haridāsa Ācārya,
Śrī Rādhā-vallabha dāsa Maṇḍala, D
(Disciples of Śrī Śrīnivāsa Ācārya):
Śrī Vṛndāvana Caṭṭarāja,
Śrī Nṛsiṁha Kavirāja,
Śrī Raghunātha Kara
Bhāgīrathī Gaṅgā
India
Bangladesh
Dhākā
Śrī Aṣṭāvakra
Vīrabhūma
Nadīyā
Jalangi
Bhairab
Ajaya
Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī,
Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa
Śrī Sarvānanda Vācaspati
Śrī Govinda, Śrī Mādhava,
Śrī Vāsudeva
Śrī Uddāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura
Śrī Mukunda Ghoṣa
Śrī Keśava Bhāratī, Śrī Gadādhara dāsa and
Madhu, the barber who shaved Mahāprabhu
Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī
Śrī Mādhāi
Śrī Narahari Ṭhākura
Śrī Mukunda Ṭhākura
Śrī Dāmodara Kavirāja
Śrī Cirañjīva Sena
Śrī Jagadānanda
Śrī Raghunandana
Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja
Śrī Govinda Kavirāja
Śrī Sulocana
Śrī Balarāma dāsa
Śrī Ratikānta Ṭhākura
Śrī Rāma-gopāla dāsa
Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu
Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura
Śrī Dhanañjaya Paṇḍita
Yaśohara
(formerly Khulnā)
Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu
Vardhamāna
Śrī Śacinandana
Gaurahari
Śrī Vāṇīnātha,
Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī
& Śrīmatī Padmāvatī
Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī
Dāmodara
Śrī Advaita Ācārya,
Śrī Harṣa Ācārya,
Śrī Gopāla Ācārya
Bangladesh
India
Śrī Keśava Bhāratī,
Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura
composed Caitanya-bhāgavata
Śrī Vaṁśīvadana,
Śrī Rāmāi Ṭhākura
Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura
Bhairab
Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita,
Śrī Sūryadāsa Sarakhela
Śrī Vakreśvara Paṇḍita
Rāmacandra Khān disrespected
Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu
Śrī Satyarāja Khān,
Śrī Rāmānanda Vasu,
Śaṅkara, Vāṇīnātha Vasu
Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu
(dacoits stole the bullock
cart filled with scriptures)
Śrī Jagadīśa
Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura
converted the prostitute
Śrī Maheśa Paṇḍita
King Vīrahamvīra
Bāṅkuḍā
Dvārakeśvar
Bhāgīrathī
Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī,
Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya
Śrī Vāsudeva Datta,
Śrī Kavi Karṇapura,
Śrī Mukunda Datta
Śrī Kālidāsa
Śrī Īśvara Purī, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita
and Khañja Bhagavānācārya
Huglī
Śrī Kamalākara Pillāi,
Śrī Dhruvānanda Brahmacārī
Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's birthplace
Caubīsa-
paraganā
(North)
Khulnā
Śrī Rudra Paṇḍita
Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu,
Śrī Vīrabhadra
Śrī Kāśīśvara Paṇḍita
Śrī Abhirāma Gosvāmī
Śrī Rāghava Paṇḍita
Chipped rice & yogurt festival
Medinīpura
Rūpa-nārāyaṇa
Haora
Bangladesh
India
Kasai
Śrī Bhāgavata Ācārya
Hugli
Caubīsa-paraganā
(South)

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

and the Prominent Holy Places of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala

Other titles by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā
Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha
Bhakti-rasāyana
Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka
Veṇu-gīta
Śrī Prabandhāvalī
Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu
Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā
Bhakti-tattva-viveka
Pinnacle of Devotion
Śrī Upadeśāmṛta
Arcana-dīpikā
The Essence of All Advice
Śrī Gauḍīya Gīti-guccha
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā
Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī – His Life and Teachings
Five Essential Essays
Śrī Harināma Mahā-mantra
Secret Truths of the Bhāgavata
Jaiva-dharma
Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala Parikramā
The Origin of Ratha-yātrā
Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā
Śrī Bhajana-rahasya
The Way of Love
Secrets of the Undiscovered Self
Śiva-tattva
Rays of the Harmonist (periodical)

For further information, please visit www.purebhakti.com

ISBN 81-86737-56-1

First printing: 1000 copies, February 2005
Printed at Samrat Press, B-88, Okhla Industrial Area Phase-II,
New Delhi 110 020, India

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

and the Prominent Holy Places of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Mathurā, Uttar Pradesh, India



Dedicated to my Holy Master

śrī gauḍīya-vedānta-ācārya-kesarī nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa
oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata śrī śrīmad

Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

the best amongst the tenth generation of descendants in the bhāgavata-paramparā from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the founder of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti and its branches throughout the world

Contents

Part 3 – Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala

Contents

Introduction

translated from the Hindi Edition

Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of the king of Vraja, is the ultimate limit of the Absolute Truth. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes and the origin of everything, though He Himself is without origin. He is the personification of eternity, knowledge and bliss. He possesses all potencies and is the most merciful. He fully embodies and relishes all transcendental mellows. This same Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who performs pastimes filled with sweetness, displays the highest degree of magnanimity as Śrī Gaurasundara, He who freely bestows transcendental love. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Gaurasundara comprise an identical spiritual principle (*tattva*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa's abode, Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, is similarly identical in all respects to Śrī Gaurasundara's abode, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. The perimeter of both is approximately thirty-two miles (16 *kosas*).[1] The Vedic scriptures reveal that Śrī Gaurasundara's pastimes are the sequel to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

In Vraja, Śrī Kṛṣṇa relishes the mellows of transcendental love, and in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma He distributes them. That devotee who performs his devotional practices aspiring for the transcendental mellows of Vraja can easily attain this *vraja-prema* by taking exclusive shelter of Śrī Gaurasundara and His dear associates in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where offences are not considered. Hence, the glories of both Navadvīpa-dhāma and Vṛndāvana-dhāma defy description. Devarṣi Nārada, Śrī Uddhava and other exalted saints possess a high calibre of *prema*; but still they aspire to acquire this rarely attained *vraja-prema*. Śrī Gaurasundara's abode easily bestows this *prema* to

sādhakas who take its shelter. In conclusion, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is as supremely magnanimous as Śrī Gaurasundara Himself.

Navadvīpa-dhāma consists of nine islands [*nava* means "nine" and *dvīpa* means "island"], namely, Antardvīpa, Sīmantadvīpa, Godrumadvīpa, Madhyadvīpa, Koladvīpa, Ṛtudvīpa, Jahnudvīpa, Modadrumadvīpa and Rudradvīpa. Furthermore, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is the abode of the nine types of devotional service as follows: Antardvīpa – self-surrender, Sīmantadvīpa – hearing, Godrumadvīpa – chanting, Madhyadvīpa – remembering, Koladvīpa – serving the Lord's lotus feet, Ṛtudvīpa – worshipping, Jahnudvīpa – offering prayers, Modadrumadvīpa – engaging as a servant, and Rudradvīpa – serving as a friend.

Śrī Gaurasundara and His intimate associates enacted their pastimes throughout Navadvīpa-dhāma. Gaurasundara also performed pastimes in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, the area surrounding Navadvīpa-dhāma, where many of His associates appeared, performed their pastimes and practised their *bhajana*. To this day the places mentioned in this book serve to generate memories of the Lord's pastimes. These pastimes are eternal, as confirmed in *Bhakti-ratnākara* (1.57):

adyāpiha sei līlā kare gaurarāya
kona-kona bhāgyavān dekhibāre pāya

> Even today Śrī Gaurasundara performs pastimes here with His associates, but only an exceedingly fortunate living entity can behold them.

The *jīva's* life becomes successful by circumambulating Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where the Lord's most munificent pastimes are enacted. Moreover, if he does so while chanting the holy name and hearing *hari-kathā*, he receives unlimited benefit.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was still a youth when Mahāprabhu (Śrī Gaurasundara) entered His unmanifest pastimes. Soon after, he renounced material life and came to Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. In the house of Mahāprabhu, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī received the priceless mercy of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, who later guided him on Navadvīpa-dhāma's thirty-two mile *parikramā*, elaborating on Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes in each and every place. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's deeply moving descriptions of this *parikramā* are recorded in *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* (see *Parikramā-khaṇḍa*).

Years later, Śrī Īśāna Ṭhākura, an associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, took Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja on *parikramā* of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives a captivating description of this *parikramā* in his *Bhakti-ratnākara*, and a concise yet heart-rending description is found in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Śrī Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*.

In recent times our grand-spiritual master, *oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, inaugurated Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* and executed it according to the section on *parikramā* in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's book *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*. He performed the *parikramā* with thousands of pilgrims to bestow this auspicious opportunity upon the wider community. Following in his footsteps, our spiritual master, *jagad-guru nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, performed this *parikramā* annually, as do those devotees who have taken shelter of him.

Annually, for the last forty-five years, this worthless and insignificant servant has also had the opportunity to participate in Śrī

Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*. For many years I performed it with my spiritual master, and in this way received several opportunities to hear narrations of pastimes and philosophical conclusions from his lotus mouth. Later, when he had entered his unmanifest pastimes, I performed *parikramā* under the guidance of his Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. This book is based on those narrations, on information taken from *Bhakti-ratnākara*, and in particular on Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* and his *Śrī Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *prema-dharma*, eternal religion of pure, transcendental loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is being extensively propagated all over the world. Consequently, countless pilgrims from India and abroad come to take *darśana* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance-place, Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, His various pastime-places in Navadvīpa-dhāma, and the appearance- and pastime-places of His associates. I hope this book will assist all inquisitive devotees.

My most worshipful Gurudeva, the crest-jewel of topmost, swan-like Vaiṣṇavas, *oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī, is the guardian of the Śrī Gauḍiya *sampradāya*, and the founder-*ācārya* of the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti and the *gauḍīya-maṭhas* throughout India under its jurisdiction. He established Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā-dhāma to preach Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *prema-dharma* amongst the Hindi-speaking population. His causeless mercy and inspiration has led to much devotional literature being translated from Bengali into Hindi, and this translating work continues to this day. It is a great pleasure to present this book to the reader today, on behalf of my Gurudeva.

Finally, I must mention that this book was produced very quickly through the enthusiasm, generosity and affectionate

support of the present chairman and *ācārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, my god-brother *parivrājakācārya* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja. I am indebted to him. May he offer this book into the lotus hands of our most beloved Gurudeva and thus bestow his affection upon me. This is our prayer at his lotus feet.

The service of the devotees who made this book ready for publication is laudable. Worthy of mention are Śrī Oṁ Prakāśa Vrajavāsī (M.A.) Sāhityaratna, Dr. Kedāra Datta Tatrāḍī (P.H.D.), Śrīman Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī, Śrīman Anaṅga-mohana Brahmacārī and others. Śrīman Jagannātha dāsa Ādhikārī and others financed its publication. I am praying to the lotus feet of Their Lordships Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Śrī Gāndhārvikā-Giridhārī that They shower Their abundant mercy and blessings upon them.

This book was published immediately after its basic completion, and may therefore contain some errors. May intelligent readers delight us by correcting these errors in the course of their reading.

Praying for a particle of the mercy of
Śrī Hari, Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,

Swami B.V. Narayan

(Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa)
Śrī Gaura-pūrṇimā, 1992
Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha
Mathurā (U.P.)

---

[1] Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma is measured here to include Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, Varsānā and Nandagrāma.

Translation: Śānti dāsī
Translation Consultation: Śrīpad B.V. Mādhava Mahārāja,
Śrīmatī Umā Dīdī and Pūrṇimā dāsī

Editing: Vaijayantī-mālā dāsī
Editing Input: Śrīpad Bhāgavata Mahārāja, Sundara-gopāla dāsa,
Śyāmarāṇī dāsī, Vicitri dāsī and Viṣṇupriyā dāsī

Photography: Vidhi-bhakti dāsī
Additional photos supplied by Kṛṣṇa-kāruṇya dāsa brahmacārī,
Śaradā dāsī, Kṛṣṇa-māyī dāsī and Sulatā dāsī

Maps
Graphics: Jaya-gopāla dāsa brahmacārī
Research: Vaijayantī-mālā dāsī
Colour Scheme for "Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala": Premavātī dāsī

Layout and Cover Design: Kṛṣṇa-kāruṇya dāsa brahmacārī

Glossary and Index: Kāntā dāsī

In various ways the following devotees gave their generous assistance to the production of this book: Śrīpad B.V. Vaikhānas Mahārāja, Śrīman Svetadvīpa dāsa, Brajanātha dāsa, Narahari dāsa brahmacārī (Ḍhāka Gauḍīya Maṭha), Jagannātha dāsa (USA), Gaurasundara dāsa, Bhīma dāsa, Brajanātha dāsa (junior), Acyuta-kṛṣṇa dāsa, Vasanta dāsa, Yaśoda-māyī dāsī and Mañjarī dāsī.

send feedback, comments or suggestions on this book to:
shantidasi@purebhakti.com or vaijayanti@purebhakti.com

Pronunciation Guide

We have used standard diacritical markings to indicate the specific pronunciation of Sanskrit and Bengali words. Pronounce *ā* like **a** in f**a**ther, *ī* like **ea** in n**ea**t, *ū* like **oo** in r**oo**t, *ṛ* like **ri** in **ri**p, *ṁ* and *ṅ* like **ng** in hu**ng**, *ś* and *ṣ* like **sh** in **sh**y, and *c* like **ch** in **ch**ap. In many Bengali words *v* is pronounced as **b**.

Preface

to the English Edition

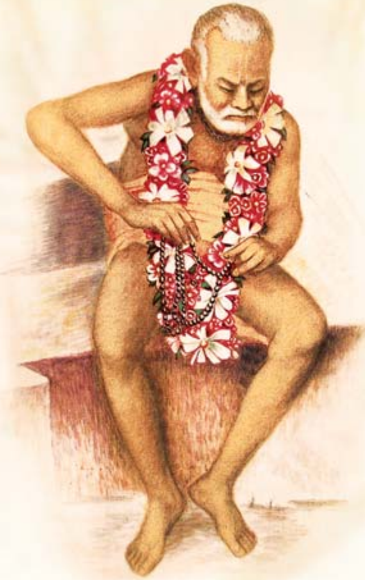
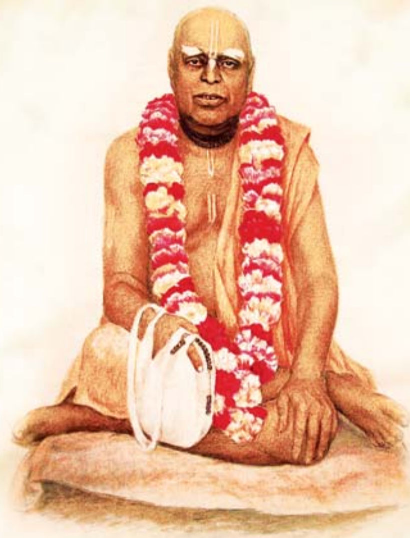
In this book our eternally merciful Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīman Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, describes the numerous sacred places of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma and introduces many of the holy places in the surrounding area of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala (which includes Bangladesh).

The enclosed map of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala offers another dimension of involvement to the reader of this and other books about Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His followers. The locations of many places were verifiable, but over time, some places have been forgotten or obscured by changes in landscape, and therefore are not easily located or available for *darśana*.

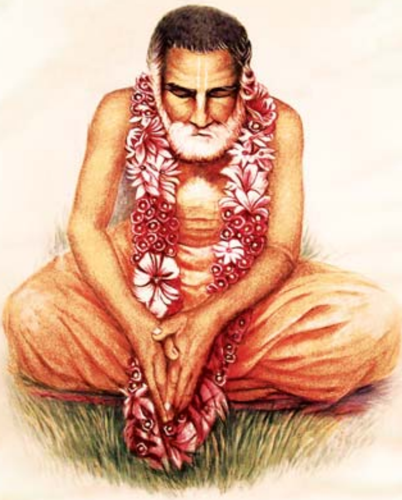
Śrīpad Bodhayan Mahārāja kindly connected us with Śrīman Mukunda Prabhu (Mr. Mukulpada Mitra) from Ḍhāka, who ensured a successful pilgrimage to Bangladesh to take photos. Both ISKCON temples and Gauḍīya-maṭhas showed their non-sectarian spirit by giving assistance in this regard.

We are ever indebted to Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, who revealed to the Western world the glories, pastimes and abodes of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and His associates. We pray to one day genuinely desire the mercy of our Gurudeva and the followers of Mahāprabhu, by which we will all find ourselves submerged in the same ocean of love for Śrī Gaurāṅga in which they are blissfully immersed.

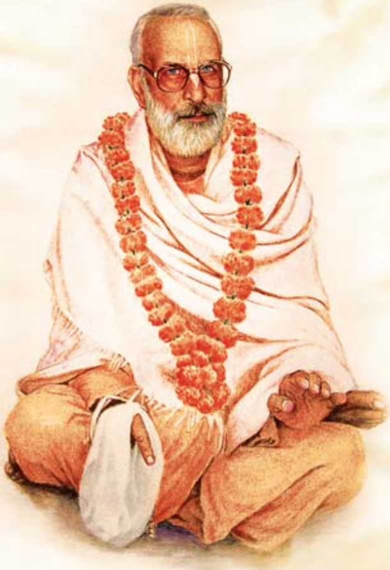
Śānti dāsī / Vaijayantī-mālā dāsī
Nityānanda-trayodaśī
21st February, 2005
Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha,
Mathurā









THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION

FROM TOP LEFT TO BOTTOM RIGHT

NITYA-LĪLĀ-PRAVIṢṬA OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA VAIṢṆAVA-SĀRVABHAUMA
Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

NITYA-LĪLĀ-PRAVIṢṬA OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA SACCIDĀNANDA
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

NITYA-LĪLĀ-PRAVIṢṬA OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA PARAMAHAṀSA
Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

NITYA-LĪLĀ-PRAVIṢṬA OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

NITYA-LĪLĀ-PRAVIṢṬA OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA ĀCĀRYA-KESARĪ
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

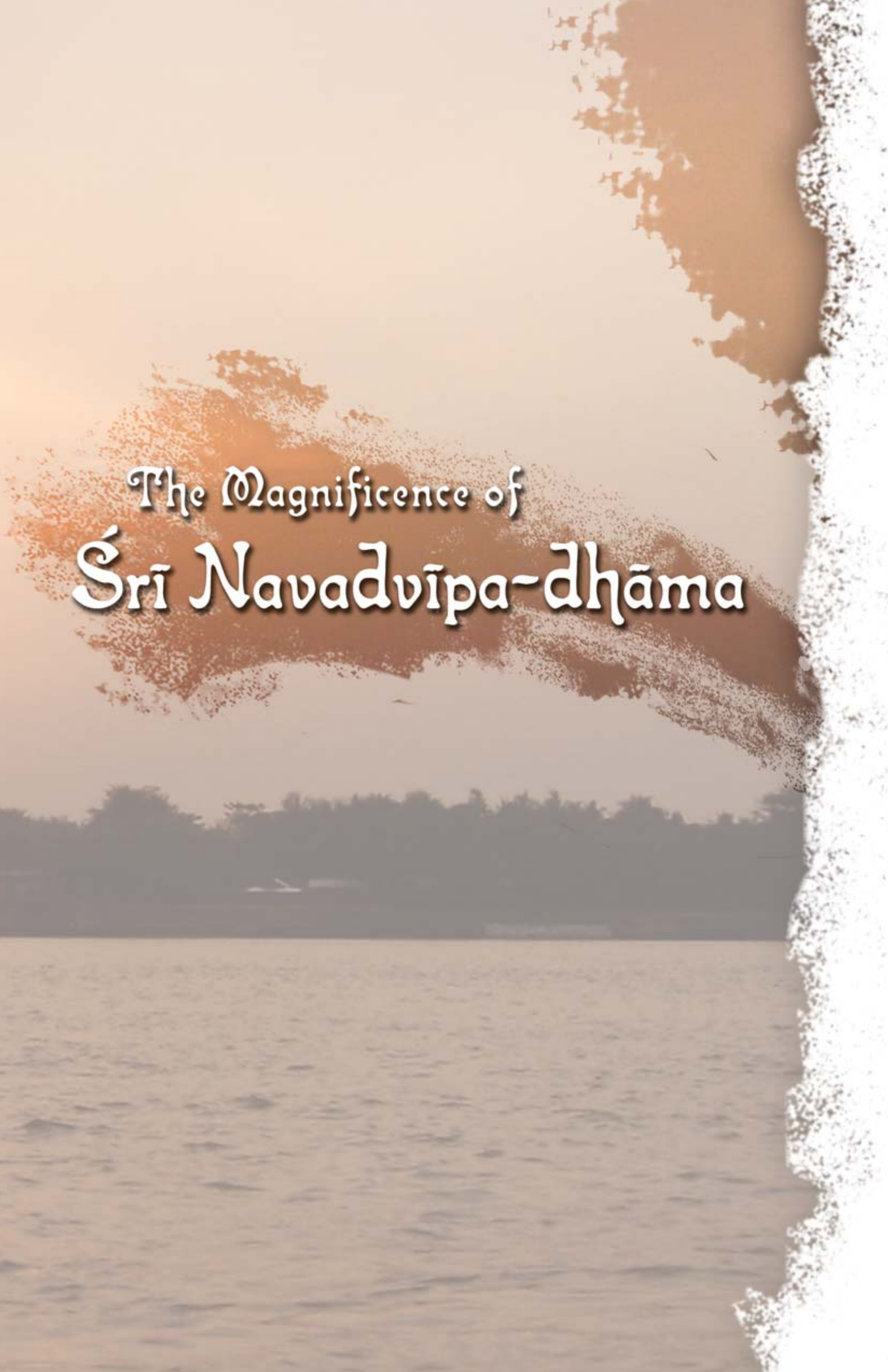
NITYA-LĪLĀ PRAVIṢṬA OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

OṀ VIṢṆUPĀDA
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyāṇa Mahārāja

Part 1



The Magnificence of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma



Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

I offer my obeisances to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, a transcendental land that is so enchanting that it steals the heart. This abode is referred to as "Brahmapura" in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, "Śvetadvīpa" in the Smṛtis and "Vraja" by rare devotees who are conversant with transcendental mellows.

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is the pastime-place of Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari, who is characterised by the sentiments and bodily lustre of Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Gaurahari is the combined form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the king of all pleasure (*rasa-rāja*), and of Śrī Rādhā, who is the personification of ecstatic love of Godhead (*mahābhāva*). "*Antaḥ kṛṣṇaṁ bahir-gauram* – inwardly He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, and outwardly He is of fair complexion (*gaura*)."

The glory of this *dhāma* is without limit or comparison. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *dhāma*, which is eternal, is as profound and esoteric as He is. However, the conditioned living entities are unable to properly behold the *dhāma*, because they have turned their backs on the Lord. As a result, they are enveloped by His illusory energy (Mahāmāyā). By the mercy of Yogamāyā-devī, Mahāmāyā removes her illusory covering of material existence, enabling the living entities to take complete *darśana* of the Lord's holy abode. This is explained by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in his *Śrī Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* (verse 11):

māyā-jālāvṛta cakṣu dekhe kṣudrāgāra
jaḍa-māyā bhūmi jala dravya jata āra
māyā kṛpā kari jāla uṭhāya jakhana
āṅkhi dekhe suviśāla cinmaya bhavana

One whose eyes are covered by the illusory energy looks upon the *dhāma* and merely sees an ordinary place and material elements, such as earth and water. If, however, the illusory energy mercifully lifts her covering, then one beholds a grand transcendental dwelling.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (*kṛṣṇa-līlā*) and Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes (*gaura-līlā*) are non-different, just as Vṛndāvana-dhāma and Navadvīpa-dhāma are non-different. *Gaura-līlā* is the sequel to *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. At the end of Dvāpara-yuga the most merciful Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the foremost enjoyer of all transcendental mellows, descended to this material world along with the entire land of Vraja and His Vraja companions. He appeared for the purpose of bestowing His transcendental love upon the living entities by performing His various pastimes.

Even though Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name and abode are unlimitedly magnanimous, the living entities (*jīvas*) cannot easily attain *kṛṣṇa-prema* from them. The principal reason for this is the *jīvas'* vast accumulation of offences. It is impossible to attain *prema* as long as one's chanting is offensive to the holy name. Amazingly, offences are not considered significant when one chants the holy name of Śrī Gaurasundara, visits His holy abode and practises devotion to Him. This *kåñëa-prema* is rarely attained, but if a person utters the names of Śrī Gaura and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, *kṛṣṇa-prema* easily manifests in his heart, even if he is offensive. Jagāī and Mādhāī are striking evidence of this.

Navadvīpa-dhāma has yet another unique magnificence. If a *sādhaka* worships Śrī Gaurasundara in the mood of neutrality (*śānta-rasa*) or servitude (*dāsya-rasa*), he easily attains the mood of either fraternal (*sakhya-rasa*), parental (*vātsalya-rasa*) or amorous love (*mādhura-rasa*) for Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that worship to Śrīman Mahāprabhu should be performed in the mood of servitude. When this mood of servitude matures, the most elevated mellow of amorous love for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa manifests in the heart of the practitioner. The object of one's *bhajana*, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, is then seen as Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

The boundless and infinite glory of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma cannot be completely described, even by the father of mankind, Brahmā; by the lord of lords, Mahādeva; or by Anantadeva with his thousands of mouths. For countless millennia demigods and goddesses, as well as Rudras and Siddhas, worship Śrī Gauracandra in various parts of Navadvīpa-dhāma just to receive His mercy and the mercy of the *dhāma*. The Śrutis, Smṛtis, Tantras, Purāṇas and other scriptures obscure their descriptions of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma's true splendour, which can only be understood by the mercy of Bhagavān and His devotees.

It was the desire of the Lord that in Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga and Dvāpara-yuga, the glory of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma remain concealed. In Kali-yuga, however, the glory of this *dhāma* resplendently manifests and the influence of the other holy places diminishes.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, descends as Śrī Gaurasundara to benefit the living entities by propagating the chanting of the holy name and by distributing *prema*. Beyond even that, He descends to personally relish the sentiments of Śrī Rādhā. At that time, His most cherished abode, Śrī Vṛndāvana, which until that time was covered, manifests as Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, and powerfully bestows *prema-bhakti*. If a person takes shelter of Śrī Gaurasundara in His abode, he will easily attain this *prema-bhakti* that dear devotees like Śrī Nārada and others rarely achieve. Śrī Gaura and Śrī Nityānanda do not seriously consider the living entities' offences; neither does Their abode. *Prema-bhakti* in the *unnatojjvala-rasa* of Vraja is attained simply by residing in the land of Navadvīpa or circumambulating it with faith.

The appearance and size of the dhāma

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma's nine islands are situated within Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala on both banks of the Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī (Gaṅgā). Here the Bhagavatī-Gaṅgā flows a twisting, zigzag course as if reluctant to continue on her way, preferring instead to forever enfold this playground of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in her embrace.

Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala extends over twenty-one *yojanas*, with Śrī Gaṅgā-devī flowing through its centre. Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is located in the heart of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, the centre of which is the Yogapīṭha-Māyāpura, where Śrīman Mahāprabhu appeared. Gauḍa-maṇḍala is a wish-fulfilling gem, because all that is here – the water, land and trees – is spiritual. All sacred places, such as the seven holy cities, as well as the Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī, are included within it. The living entities' *darśana* of this extraordinary *dhāma* is solely dependent on the mercy of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu.

Śrī Navadvīpa is shaped like an extensive eight-petalled lotus flower, the centre of which is Antardvīpa Māyāpura. Sīmantadvīpa, Godrumadvīpa, Madhyadvīpa, Koladvīpa, Rudradvīpa, Jahnudvīpa, Modadrumadvīpa and Ṛtudvīpa constitute the lotus' eight petals. The centre of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, has a circumference of sixteen *kosas* (approximately thirty-two miles), and is also like the pericarp of a lotus flower. According to the scriptures, Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance-place, Antardvīpa Māyāpura, is situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank along with Sīmantadvīpa, Godrumadvīpa and Madhydvīpa. Five islands – Koladvīpa, Ṛtudvīpa, Rudradvīpa, Jahnudvīpa and Modadrumadvīpa – lie on the western bank. By examining five hundred year old government maps and by studying the authoritative literatures

of that time it is clearly evident that Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance-place was situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank. *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and other old authoritative scriptures give clear descriptions of how Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, Chand Kazi's samādhi, Ballāla Sena's fort, Ballāla-dīghī, Śrīdhara-āṅgana and other such places were situated in close proximity on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank. It is in present times only that the town of Navadvīpa is situated on the Gaṅgā's western bank, which is actually the location of the original Koladvīpa. When the Gaṅgā flooded the original Navadvīpa, its residents moved to settle on the higher ground on the western bank. Changes like this have taken place frequently. Today, once again, there are many beautiful, tall temples decorating the Gaṅgā's eastern bank.

The circumambulation of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma begins from Antardvīpa Māyāpura. From there one progresses in sequence to Sīmantadvīpa, Godrumadvīpa and Madhyadvīpa. After crossing the Gaṅgā, one then continues to Koladvīpa, Ṛtudvīpa, Jahnudvīpa, Modadrumadvīpa and Rudradvīpa, returning to Antardvīpa to complete the *parikramā*. Previously Rudradvīpa was located on the Gaṅgā's western bank, but now it is on the eastern bank. The auspicious day to commence the yearly *parikramā* is on the eighth or ninth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Phālguna (February–March), and it is auspicious to finish it on Pūrṇimā in that same month. In this way one can take *darśana* of one or two different islands each day, and on Pūrṇimā, the appearance day of Śrī Gaurasundara, one may take *darśana* of Śrīdhāma Māyāpura.

In his *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura beautifully describes the *parikramā* of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma in Bengali poetry. He also describes it briefly in his *Śrī*

Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga, as does Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his *Bhakti-ratnākara*.

First Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu guided Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī on this *parikramā*, and thereafter, Mahāprabhu's servant Śrī Īśāna Ṭhākura, a resident of Māyāpura, took Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja around the *dhāma*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura himself later performed this same *parikramā* and described the places of *darśana* in all nine islands in *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*. Next Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura performed the *parikramā* yearly and his principal disciples have continued this practice to this present day. *Jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and his followers are prominent among those disciples performing this *parikramā*.

Each of Navadvīpa's nine islands represent one of the nine kinds of devotion described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as follows: Godrumadvīpa – chanting (*kīrtanam*), Madhyadvīpa – remembering (*smaraṇam*), Koladvīpa – serving the Lord's lotus feet (*pāda-sevanam*), Ṛtudvīpa – worshipping (*arcanam*), Jahnudvīpa – offering prayers (*vandanam*), Modadrumadvīpa – engaging as a servant (*dāsyam*), Rudradvīpa – serving as a friend (*sakhyam*), Sīmantadvīpa – hearing (*śravaṇam*), and Antardvīpa – fully surrendering one's very self to the Lord (*ātma-nivedanam*).

The twelve forests of Vraja are concealed within the nine islands of Navadvīpa, but in Navadvīpa these forests are situated in a different order. Antardvīpa is Gokula-Mahāvana. North of Pṛthu-kuṇḍa (or Ballāla-dīghī) are Madhuvana and the city of Mathurā. In the middle of Madhuvana, near Śrīdhara's hut, is Viśrāma-ghāṭa, where Śrīman Mahāprabhu rested after reforming the Kazī.

Godrumadvīpa is Nandagrāma, where countless cowherd boys reside. At this place Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu would become absorbed in ecstasy upon remembering their cowherding pastimes with the cowherd boys. Madhyadvīpa is a part of Kāmyavana, and both Puṣkara and Naimiṣāraṇya are also present there. Koladvīpa is Bahulāvana and Campaka-haṭṭa is Khadiravana. Ṛtudvīpa is Rādhā-kuṇḍa, which is a part of Vṛndāvana. Nearby, in Koladvīpa's Kuliyā-pahāḍa is Govardhana. Jahnudvīpa is Bhadravana, and Modadrumadvīpa is Bhāṇḍīravana. Mahatpura in Modadrumadvīpa is Kāmyavana. Rudradvīpa is Baelvana and Sīmantadvīpa, situated near Rudradvīpa, is also a part of Baelvana. In this way, the twelve forests of Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana are concealed within the islands of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma.

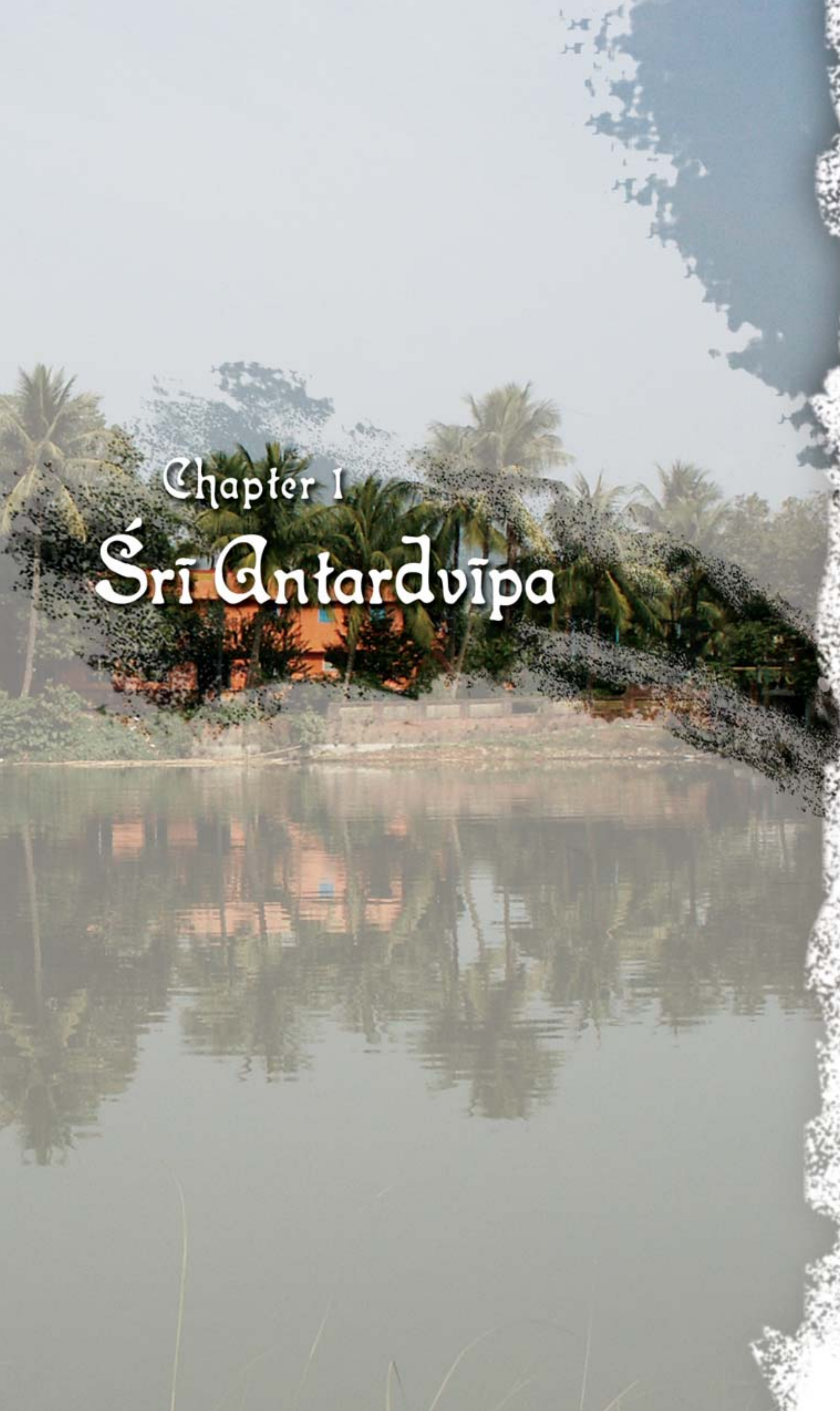
Part 2

The Nine Islands



Chapter 1

Śrī Antardvīpa



Ātopura-grāma

Four-headed Brahmā performed austerities at Ātopura-grāma to become free from the offence he committed during Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of stealing the cowherd boys and calves. Feeling deeply remorseful and having contemplated Śrīman Mahāprabhu's coming pastimes and His munificence, he worshipped the Lord at this place.

Mahāprabhu's pastimes are eternal, yet sometimes they manifest in this world, and other times they do not. Consequently, it is not against established philosophical conclusions to worship Śrīman Mahāprabhu even before He performs His pastimes in this world. Satisfied with Lord Brahmā's worship, Śrīman Mahāprabhu appeared before him. Brahmājī begged forgiveness for his offences, and asked for a boon: "When You exhibit Your pastimes in this world, please arrange for me to take birth in a low-class family and, thus in a mood of humility and wretchedness, fulfil Your innermost desire with my service."

Śrīman Mahāprabhu then granted Lord Brahmā his boon, saying, "You will take birth in a Muslim family and serve Me by preaching and loudly chanting the holy names of Hari. I will appear in this form of Gaurāṅga, having accepted the senti-ment and bodily lustre of My beloved Rādhā for the purpose of fulfilling My three special internal desires. I will madden all the living entities in the universe by making them dance in *harināma-saṅkīrtana* and by bestowing upon them the most elevated and resplendent *prema*, which is rarely attained even by the demigods. You will assist Me in fulfilling My heart's desires to accomplish this."

This island (*dvīpa*) became known as Antardvīpa, because it was here that the Lord revealed His internal (*antara*) sentiments to Brahmā. In Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes this same Brahmā

appeared as *nāma-ācārya* Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the authority in the chanting of the holy name. Antardvīpa is also known as Ātopura.

Antardvīpa's central point, the Mahā-yogapīṭha, is the appearance-place of the Lord, and is also known as Māyāpura. This Antardvīpa consists of Ballāla-dīghī (Pṛthu-kuṇḍa), a portion of Vāmana-pukura, Śrīnāthapura, Gaṅgā-nagara and other places. Śrī Jagannātha Miśra's house was within the present Vāmana-pukura. Although Śrīman Mahāprabhu eternally performs pastimes here, only fortunate souls can witness them.

When the foundation to the present grand Yogapīṭha Temple in Māyāpura was being dug, a small four-armed deity was found. This deity had been worshipped by Śrī Jagannātha Miśra, whose temple was located in that spot. And just nearby, under a large neem tree, Nimāī took birth from Śrī Śacī-devī's womb. Śacī-devī's father, Śrī Nīlāmbara Cakravartī, was a renowned scholar of astrology and logic. Śacī-devī was highly chaste, devout and the embodiment of mercy. Her eight daughters died at birth, one after the other. She then gave birth to an extraordinary son named Śrī Viśvarūpa. He was learned in the scriptures, peaceful in nature and benevolent. He was omniscient and his intellect was unparalleled. Although he was incomparably beautiful, he was completely detached from sense enjoyment. Nimāī took birth after Viśvarūpa.

Nimāī was none other than Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself who had accepted the mood and lustre of Śrī Rādhā. He chose to appear in this world for several reasons among which four are prominent:

(1) To propagate the *yuga-dharma*, or the religious practice for the age. This is the congregational chanting of the holy names (*śrī-nāma-saṅkīrtana*).

(2) To distribute what had never been given before – *unnatojjvala-prema*, transcendental love in the elevated amorous mellow.

(3) To respond to the entreaty of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, who was perturbed by the extremely irreligious state of the world at that time. Śrī Advaita Ācārya had worshipped Śrī Kṛṣṇa with Gaṅgā water and *tulasī* leaves, and thus induced the Lord to appear.

(4) To fulfil His three confidential desires. Kṛṣṇa, who is supremely merciful and the enjoyer of all transcendental mellows, accepted the mood and lustre of Śrī Rādhā and appeared as Śrī Gaurāṅga:

(a) to taste the greatness of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *prema*,

(b) to personally taste, as Śrīmatī Rādhikā does, all the sweetness of His form, and

(c) to taste Śrīmatī Rādhikā's happiness when She relishes His sweetness.



Nimāī cried often, and only stopped when someone chanted the holy names.

Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu took birth on 23rd Phālguna in the Śakābda Era 1407, that is [according to the Christian Era] 28th February, 1486. It was a full-moon day, and He appeared at twilight. There was a lunar eclipse that evening, and everywhere hundreds of thousands of people were singing the glories of Hari. In such a glorious atmosphere, which was surcharged with the chanting of the holy name, He appeared from the womb of Śrī Śacī-devī. Because He took birth under a neem tree He was named Nimāī, and because His complexion was golden in lustre, He became known as Gaurāṅga (golden-limbed). The ladies exclaimed, "Hari Bol, Hari Bol!" and that abode resounded continuously with the vibration of the holy names.

Nimāī's childhood nature was extremely restless, just like Śrī Kṛṣṇa's. Once, in the house of Jagannātha Miśra, He caught a snake and proceeded to play with it. Another time He climbed upon the shoulders of a thief and rode on them throughout the town. On an Ekādaśī day He begged for the food that was being



Restless Nimāī caught a snake and played with it.



offered to the deity in the house of a devotee. He cried often, and only stopped when someone chanted the holy names, at which He broke out into loud peals of laughter. Sometimes, on His way home from school He would play games in the Gaṅgā with the other children. When His elder brother Viśvarūpa accepted the renounced order, however, Nimāī's behaviour became more subdued and He studied at Śrī Gaṅgādāsa's school, which He attended with Gadādhara, Dāmodara, Jagadānanda, Mukunda and other boys. Later He established a Sanskrit school in His own home where He taught grammar.

At one of the Gaṅgā's *ghāṭas* in Antardvīpa, He crushed the pride of a champion of erudition named Keśava Kāśmīrī and instructed him in *bhajana*. In Antardvīpa He was married twice; first to Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā-devī, and after she left this world, to Śrī Viṣṇupriyā-devī. It was from here that He travelled to Gayā, where Śrī Īśvara Purī initiated Him into the chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names. When He returned He had become transformed into an exalted devotee who constantly tasted transcendental sentiments. Finally, in a mood of detachment, He left His aged mother and His wife Viṣṇupriyā and crossed the Gaṅgā to


The deities of Śrī Gaurāṅga with His wives Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā-devī (left) and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā-devī (right)

accept the renounced order in Kaṭavā.

Later, in Śāntipura, His mother requested Him to take up His residence in Purī-dhāma instead of Vṛndāvana, and He agreed to do this. He later left Purī to travel throughout South India where He discussed *bhakti-tattva* with Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya on the bank of the river Godāvarī. In all, He remained based in Purī-dhāma for twenty-four years, the first six of which were spent travelling to Vṛndāvana, South India and other places. During the remaining eighteen years He experienced an unceasing restlessness caused by feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa. Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda were able to pacify Śrīman Mahāprabhu's specific moods by reciting appropriate verses from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, or by singing songs by Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati, or from Jayadeva Gosvāmī's *Gīta-Govinda*. He had conducted His married life as an ideal house-holder, and when He renounced it, He lived a life of complete detachment. In this way He set the example how to engage in the ideal, renounced life of *bhajana*.

When Śrīman Mahāprabhu accepted *sannyāsa*, the lives of Mother Śacī and Viṣṇupriyā-devī became filled with intolerable separation from Him. At that time, they were cared for by Īśāna Ṭhākura and Śrī Vaṁśī-vadanānanda. In separation from

Mahāprabhu, Viṣṇupriyā-devī forgot to eat, drink or tend to other bodily needs. Indeed, she forgot everything, and became extremely weak and frail. She simply chanted the *mahā-mantra* from morning to noon, and for each *mantra* she chanted, she put aside one grain of rice. At noon she prepared that rice and offered it to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and her deity of Mahāprabhu. She then offered the *prasāda* to Śacī-devī, who would accept some and leave the rest, which amounted to a mere handful, for Viṣṇupriyā-devī. With a restless heart she remembered Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu day and night, and as she chanted the holy name, she wept. Faithful devotees received *darśana* of her lotus feet only after repeated requests.

Unable to tolerate separation from Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Vaiṣṇavas like Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita gradually moved away from Navadvīpa to reside elsewhere. Later, when the Gaṅgā flooded a large part of Navadvīpa, the inhabitants of Navadvīpa moved to the western bank, called Kuliyā-Pahāḍapura.



Śacī-devī's delivery room (where Nimāī's umbilical cord was cut)

Here under a neem tree, baby Nimāī took birth from the womb of Mother Śacī. The original tree has since departed from this world, and a new tree has grown in the same place.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's birthplace

Kṣetrapāla Śiva, or Gopīśvara Mahādeva

In the Yogapīṭha, Kṣetrapāla Śiva, the protector of the *dhāma*, is eternally worshipped. He is also known as Śrī Gopīśvara, and he bestows service to the *dhāma*. Pure devotees who perform their worship in accordance with the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (the *śrī-rūpānugas*) honour Kṣetrapāla Śiva as Gopīśvara Śiva, and pray to him for eternal service to Śrī Gaurasundara that is devoid of material attributes. Śrī Gaura is the embodiment of *rasarāja-mahābhāva*, the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Gopīśvara Śiva's *praṇāma-mantra* (from Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's *Śrī Saṅkalpa-kalpa-druma*, text 103) is:



vṛdāvanāvani-pate! jaya soma! soma-maule!
sanaka-sanandana-sanātana-nāradeḍya
gopīśvara! vraja-vilāsi-yugāṅghri-padme
prema prayaccha nirūpādhi namo namas te

O gatekeeper of Vṛndāvana! O Soma, all glories to you! O you whose forehead is decorated with the moon, and who is worshipful for the sages headed by Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Nārada! O Gopīśvara! Desiring that you bestow upon me *prema* for the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, who perform joyous pastimes in Vraja-dhāma, I offer obeisances unto you time and again.

Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva Temple

Close to Kṣetrapāla Śiva is a temple of Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva, who destroys obstacles on the path of devotion, and nearby are the deities of Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara.



Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva (left) and Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara (right)



Śrī Gaura-kuṇḍa

In Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Śyāma-kuṇḍa are supremely glorious. Similarly, in Navadvīpa, which is non-different from Vṛndāvana, Śrī Gaura-kuṇḍa in Māyāpura is matchlessly glorious. The devotees of Śrī Gaurasundara bathe and perform *ācamana* in this pond, and thus they taste the sweetness of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Many exalted personalities, expert in *bhajana*, perform their worship here.

Vṛddha-Śiva, or Śiva-ḍovā

Vṛddha-Śiva is located on the bank of the Gaṅgā south of the Yogapīṭha. In Śrīman Mahāprabhu's time there was a temple of Vṛddha-Śiva here, but the temple has since disappeared in the Gaṅgā's flow. At that place, which is now known as Śiva-ḍovā, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu gave Śrī Jiva Gosvāmī *darśana* of Vṛddha-Śiva.

Mahāprabhu-ghāṭa

Mahāprabhu-ghāṭa was situated near the Yogapīṭha, six yards north of Vṛddha-Śiva. These *ghāṭas* no longer exist having been submerged by the Gaṅgā. Here Nimāī, as a young boy and as a scholar, used to bathe in the Gaṅgā and perform water-sports. Just as the Yamunā witnessed Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, the Gaṅgā received the good fortune to delight in Nimāī's pastimes.

Jagāī-Mādhāī-ghāṭa, or Mādhāī-ghāṭa

Jagāī-Mādhāī-ghāṭa was near Jagannātha Miśra's house in Māyāpura, on the bank of the Gaṅgā. By the mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Mādhāī used to clean this *ghāṭa* with his own hands.

Jagāī and Mādhāī, previously Jagadānanda and Mādhavānanda Bandhopādhyāya, were born into a prestigious *brāhmaṇa* family of Navadvīpa, but bad association corrupted their characters and they became great rogues, drunkards and sinners. In fear of their oppressive and tyrannical behaviour, no virtuous persons – especially the elderly, children or women – would come to bathe at this *ghāṭa.*

Śrīman Mahāprabhu had appointed the exalted Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridāsa Ṭhākura to go throughout the town to propagate *nāma-prema*, transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa through

chanting the holy name. They both considered Jagāī and Mādhāī to be the most suitable candidates for receiving *nāma-prema*, and they asked them to chant the holy name. But the brothers were completely intoxicated on wine. Mādhāī took a piece of a broken, earthen wine pot and threw it at Nityānanda Prabhu's head, making it bleed. Haridāsa Ṭhākura reported this unfortunate incident to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who, enraged, went there with all of His associates. Raising His hand above His head, He summoned His disc weapon, crying, "*Cakra, cakra!*" The sight of the transcendental disc weapon in the hand of Mahāprabhu made Jagāī and Mādhāī tremble in fear. This melted the heart of the most compassionate Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, who grasped Mahāprabhu's hand and said, "The purpose of Your appearance in this incarnation is to distribute love of God. It is therefore not fitting for You to kill someone. Instead it is appropriate for You to purify a person's heart by giving him *prema*. Jagāī prevented Mādhāī from striking Me a second time, so please be merciful to him."



Jagāī and Mādhāī receive mercy from Nityānanda Prabhu and Mahāprabhu.

Mahāprabhu embraced Jagāī, who fainted in ecstasy, then He placed His feet on Jagāī's chest. Jagāī began to weep and chant, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa!" Seeing this, Mādhāī fell at the feet of Nityānanda Prabhu begging for forgiveness and Mahāprabhu bestowed *prema* upon him also. Mādhāī asked Nityānanda Prabhu how he could become free from his former sins of killing various living entities, and Nityānanda Prabhu instructed him to tend to the maintenance of this *ghāṭa*. He told him that rendering service to the Gaṅgā would remove his offences. On the order of Nityānanda Prabhu, Mādhāī performed this service for the rest of his life, and in this way took the dust of the Vaiṣṇavas' feet. He built steps at this *ghāṭa* with his own hands and also cleaned them daily. People therefore called this *ghāṭa* Jagāī-Mādhāī-ghāṭa, or just Mādhāī-ghāṭa. It was situated thirty yards north of Mahāprabhu-ghāṭa.

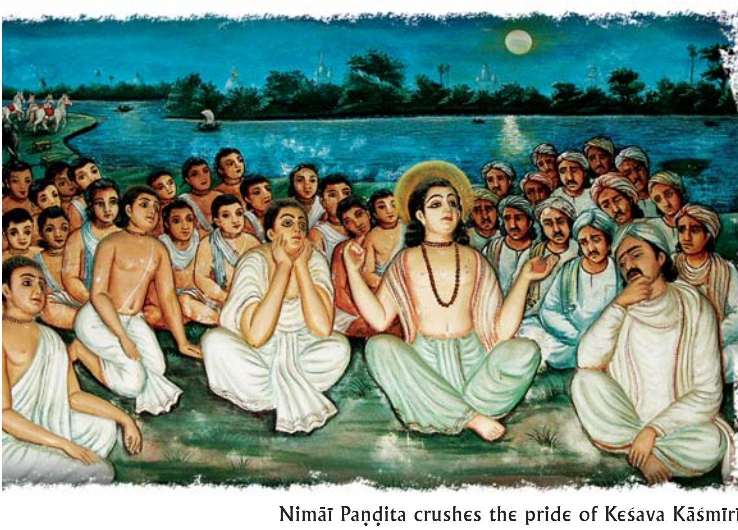
Bārakonā-ghāṭa

In His youth Nimāī Paṇḍīta used to teach Sanskrit grammar to students in His own school. After class, He would discuss the scriptures with His students at Bārakonā-ghāṭa. Once, the eminent Keśava Kāśmīrī, a *digvijayī-paṇḍita* from Kāśmīra, arrived there with hundreds of his disciples. Keśava Kāśmīrī was famous for having defeated brilliant scholars all over India. In East India, Navadvīpa was known as an important centre of learning where the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Smṛtis, Purāṇas and the six systems of Indian philosophy, especially *navyanyāya* (a new kind of logic) were taught. People came from great distances to study here.

Keśava Kāśmīrī had received the blessings of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning. He was especially gifted in composing highly ornamented poetry, and in a moment hundreds of

original Sanskrit verses would issue forth from his mouth in an unbroken stream. He could defeat the most prominent scholars with his brilliant speech, which revealed his great expertise in logic and other talents. When, therefore, he arrived in the town of Navadvīpa he very proudly declared that any scholar there should come forward to debate with him; otherwise, they should write a letter declaring his victory over them. But no scholar came forward. These scholars were all envious of Nimāī Paṇḍita and with great cunning they told Keśava Kāśmīrī, "The boy Nimāī Paṇḍita is Navadvīpa's most insignificant scholar. First debate with Him, and then you can debate with us."

It was dusk, and as the sun set into the Gaṅgā, its red rays playfully danced on her waves. The brilliant Nimāī Paṇḍita sat on the bank of the Gaṅgā amongst a group of students, teaching them grammar. The sky was reddish as if filled with *anurāga* and the atmosphere was serene. Seeing the students, Keśava Kāśmīrī, intoxicated with pride, came over to them. Nimāī's sweet voice was speaking excellent and logical statements on



Nimāī Paṇḍita crushes the pride of Keśava Kāśmīrī.

grammar and *navyanyāya*, thus revealing His extraordinary brilliance. This attracted Keśava Kāśmīrī, who sat down amongst them, thus making some of the boys quite nervous. Keśava Kāśmīrī asked one boy, "What is this student's name?"

The boy replied, "He is our Nimāī Paṇḍita." Merely hearing this name filled Keśava Kāśmīrī with fear. One of the boys whispered into Nimāī's ear, "This is Keśava Kāśmīrī." Nimāī Paṇḍita turned to Keśava Kāśmīrī and spoke respectfully. "It is our good fortune that today you have come into our midst. We have heard of your glories. Please recite something for us."

Keśava Kāśmīrī asked, "What subject matter would you like to hear about?"

Nimāī replied, "We would like to hear Śrī Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī's glories from your lips." Immediately Keśava Kāśmīrī began reciting a shower of freshly composed verses adorned with alliteration and other literary ornaments. The students were stunned. Nimāī Paṇḍita then asked him to select just one of the verses he had recited and describe its virtues and faults.

Keśava Kāśmīrī asked, "Which verse would you like me to describe?" Nimāī Paṇḍita immediately chose a verse from the middle of the poem. Seeing Nimāī's capacity to hear something and at once commit it to memory, Keśava Kāśmīrī was struck with wonder and trembled within. Nonetheless, out of pride he answered, "In Keśava Kāśmīrī's compositions there is never any fault." He pointed out the verse's five virtues in regard to alliteration and he also pointed out other literary ornaments. Nimāī Paṇḍita, with humility and gravity, then pointed out five more virtues. When He further pointed out five faults, everyone was astounded.

His pride crushed and unable to respond, the defeated Keśava Kāśmīrī returned to his quarters. That night Mother

Sarasvatī consoled him saying, "The person who defeated you is my Master, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. You are highly fortunate to have received His *darśana*. Fall at His feet and beg forgiveness."

Early the next morning, Keśava Kāśmīrī met Nimāī Paṇḍita and fell at His feet begging forgiveness. Nimāī Paṇḍita instructed him, "The purpose of scholarship is not to defeat others; its only purpose is to worship Kṛṣṇa. Go to Vraja and worship Him with a simple heart." Keśava Kāśmīrī offered his obeisances to Nimāī Paṇḍita and left.

Nāgariyā-ghāṭa

Ten yards north of Bārakonā-ghāṭa at nearby Gaṅgā-nagara was Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita's Sanskrit school in which Nimāī studied with the other boys. On the way home from school Nimāī would stop by Nāgariyā-ghāṭa and tell the young girls to worship Him. He blessed the girls who worshipped His feet that their future husbands would be handsome, pleasant, wealthy and respected. And He threatened the others with husbands that would be crippled and poor. Sometimes, while taking bath in the Gaṅgā, He would splash water on the *brāhmaṇas* who were chanting *mantras* and offering water to the sun, and when they angrily rebuked Him, He took water in His mouth and sprayed them with it. Angered upon hearing the complaints of the *brāhmaṇas* and the young girls, Jagannātha Miśra went to the *ghāṭa* with stick in hand. But he was unable to find Nimāī because He had taken another path home, having told the boys to inform His father that He had gone straight home from school. Nimāī smeared dust on His body and sprinkled it with drops of ink, just to hide any indication that He might have bathed. When Jagannātha Mīśra arrived at the house, he saw the dust and ink on Nimāī's body

and an expression of pure innocence on His face, and he did not say a word.

It was at Nāgariyā-ghāṭa that Śrī Śacī-devī first saw Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā and selected her to be Nimāī's bride.

On the day the Kazi was subdued Śrīman Mahāprabhu came here with a huge *saṅkīrtana* party and chanted for some time. Then, carrying burning torches and performing *kīrtana* with *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas*, they went to Chand Kazi's residence in Simuliyā-grāma.

Gaṅgā-nagara

Today Gaṅgā-nagara is covered by the Gaṅgā. Here, Navadvīpa's famous scholar Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita had his school where Nimāī as a boy completed His studies in grammar. Nimāī then opened a school in His own home. Gaṅgādāsa, who was Sāndīpanī Muni in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, greatly honoured Nimāī.

Upon returning from Gayā, Nimāī was absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-prema*. "Nimāī the teacher" had become "Nimāī the devotee", and He gave up teaching. When Nimāī's students complained to Paṇḍita Gaṅgādāsa about this, he showed them mercy by presenting to *bhāvuka* Nimāī many logical arguments why He should resume His teaching. Nimāī Paṇḍita complied to his instruction, but now He revealed every syllable and aphorism as a manifestation of Śrī Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa, who attracts the entire universe. Before His students' very eyes, He would glorify Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and become immersed in ecstasy, and upon coming to external consciousness tears would flow from His eyes and His voice would choke up. All He could say was, "I can no longer teach grammar that is devoid of devotion to Kṛṣṇa." He then absorbed Himself in *kīrtana* accompanied by His students, who abandoned their studies to join Him.



Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, or Khola-bhāṅgāra-ḍāṅgā

This place is situated about two hundred yards north of the Yogapīṭha. Here in the extensive courtyard of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's house, Mahāprabhu used to perform *harināma-saṅkīrtana* together with His associates. All night long Śrīvāsa and his four brothers would perform *kīrtana* with *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas*. The atheistic Hindus in the neighbourhood complained to Navadvīpa's ruler, Maulānā Sirājuddīna Chand Kazi, who decreed that no Hindu should loudly utter the holy name or loudly perform *kīrtana*. Anyone who did so would be duly punished and lose his caste. In spite of this decree, the *kīrtanas* at Śrīvāsa-aṅgana continued. Finally the Kazi himself came here and smashed a *mṛdaṅga*. Śrīvāsa-aṅgana is therefore also known as Khola-bhāṅgāra-dāṅgā, "the place where the *mṛdaṅga* was broken". It is also Śrīman Mahāprabhu's place of *saṅkīrtana-rāsa*.

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita

The eminent Śrīvāsa Paṇḍīta was the principal supporter of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *gṛhastha-līlā*, or pastimes performed as a householder. The following significant pastimes took place at his house:

(1) When He returned from Gayā, Śrīman Mahāprabhu sat upon Śrī Viṣṇu's throne and in full splendour displayed His opulence as the Supreme Lord.

(2) The devotees performed the *abhiṣeka*, or sacred bathing, of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

(3) Śrīman Mahāprabhu bestowed love of God upon all His devotees. Mother Śacī-devī also received *prema* after begging Śrī Advaita Ācārya's forgiveness for her offence to him.

(4) Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's *vyāsa-pūjā* took place here.

(5) Śrīman Mahāprabhu showed Nityānanda Prabhu His six-armed form, holding a bow and arrow, flute, staff and water pot in His hands.

(6) Śrīman Mahāprabhu manifested *sāta-prahariyā-bhāva*, "the ecstasy of twenty-one hours".

(7) For one year *kīrtana* was secretly performed the entire night long.

(8) Śrīman Mahāprabhu showed Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita His form of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva.

(9) When Śrīvāsa's son left his body, Mahāprabhu stopped the *kīrtana* and called the dead boy's soul to re-enter his body. Mahāprabhu asked him, "Having left Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, where are you going?"

The boy answered, "No one is anybody's son, brother, friend or parent. These relationships are all false, and cause pain and sorrow. The Supreme Lord is the one supreme father of all living entities. By the influence of

Mahāmāyā the living entities wander throughout the 8,400,000 species of life, both high and low, while suffering the results of their activities. Only by worshipping the Supreme Lord and receiving His mercy and the mercy of His devotees, can one become free from illusion and attain transcendental service to Him. According to my previous deeds I took birth in this house, and now, the time I was destined to live here has come to an end." Śrīman Mahāprabhu then gave the boy permission to leave his body. When the residents of Śrīvāsa's house saw and heard this they became enlightened by transcendental knowledge and devoted themselves fully to *bhagavad-bhajana.*

(10) Śrī Mahāprabhu gave His remnants to Nārāyaṇī, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's young niece. The son of Nārāyaṇī is Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, the Vedavyāsa of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes and the author of *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata.*



Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, who is an incarnation of Śrī Nārada, is a branch of the Śrī Caitanya tree and is one of the Pañca-tattva. He took birth in the district of Śrīhaṭṭa and later came to live near Śrīman Mahāprabhu's house in Navadvīpa. When Mahāprabhu left for Purī after accepting *sannyāsa*, Śrīvāsa felt Navadvīpa to be desolate and moved to Kumārahaṭṭa. Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His associates used to perform *kīrtana*-pastimes in Śrīvāsa's courtyard. Once an envious *brāhmaṇa*, Gopāla Cāpāla, who was displeased with Śrīvāsa, placed impure objects at the door of his house. As a result of this

offence Gopāla Cāpāla contracted leprosy. Later, when he approached Śrīvāsa crying and begging for forgiveness, Śrīvāsa forgave him.

Once, Śrīvāsa's mother-in-law hid herself in Śrīvāsa-aṅgana to listen to the *kīrtana*, but Śrīvāsa sensed her presence and knowing her to be unqualified to participate, made her leave.

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita was both a singer and dancer in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *kīrtana*. During the Ratha-yātrā festival he used to stay with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Jagannātha Purī.

Śrī Advaita-bhavana,
the house of Śrī Advaita Ācārya

Śrī Advaita-bhavana is situated twenty yards north of Śrīvāsa-aṅgana. Śrī Advaita Ācārya's birthplace is Navagrāma in the district of Śrīhaṭṭa, but he later moved to Śāntipura. He also resided here in Navadvīpa. He taught his many students the explanations of *bhakti* as given in the *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam*.



Śrī Advaita-bhavana

Nimāī's elder brother, Śrī Viśvarūpa, was one of his many students. On the order of His mother, the boy Nimāī used to fetch Viśvarūpa from school and bring him home. Though normally grave, Advaita Ācārya was enchanted by Nimāī's behaviour and broken speech. Smiling, Nimāī looked at him as if to say, "Although you called for Me to come to this world, you cannot recognise Me. The time will come though, when you certainly will." This amazing child made a deep impression on Śrī Advaita Ācārya.

It was at this very same place that Śrī Advaita Ācārya used to worship Kṛṣṇa with *tulasī* leaves and Gaṅgā water according to the rules of the *pāñcarātrika* system, or the regulative principles enjoined in the *Nārada-pañcarātra*. To remove the sorrows of the living entities, he loudly called out to the Lord. Hearing this call Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as Śrī Gaurāṅga.

Here at Advaita-bhavana, Viśvarūpa, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīvāsa, Gaṅgādāsa, Śuklāmbara, Candraśekhara, Murārī Gupta and other Vaiṣṇavas used to assemble and become absorbed in the sweet mellows of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. After Śrīman Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa*, Advaita Ācārya moved to Śāntipura. He then met with Śrīman Mahāprabhu every year at the time of the Ratha-yātrā in Jagannātha Purī.

Śrī Gadādhara-aṅgana

Ten yards east of Advaita-bhavana is Gadādhara-aṅgana. This was the residence of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, whose father was Śrī Mādhava Miśra. Gadādhara Paṇḍita was Mahāprabhu's fellow student and dear friend, and in their childhood, Mahāprabhu used to bother him by debating with him about logic (*nyāya*). After Mahāprabu took *sannyāsa*, Gadādhara went with Him to Śrī Jagannātha Purī and stayed with Him there. It was with the sole intention of remaining with



Śrī Gadādhara-aṅgana

Mahāprabhu in Purī that he accepted *kṣetra-sannyāsa*, or a vow to remain in a holy place of pilgrimage and never leave.

Śrī Gadādhara was a great scholar, and a *rasika*, melodic speaker of the *Bhāgavatam*. Upon hearing the narrations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the lips of Gadādhara, Śrīman Mahāprabhu would become overwhelmed with transcendental emotions. In Jagannātha Purī he lived at Śrī Gopīnātha Ṭoṭā

where he served Śrī Gopīnātha, and Mahāprabhu would come there to hear him narrating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. At the close of His manifest pastimes, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu entered the temple of Śrī Gopīnātha and merged into the deity. Sometime later Gadādhara Paṇḍita also entered his unmanifest pastimes.

It is said that when Śrī Gopīnātha saw how difficult it was for Gadādhara Paṇḍita to decorate Him with garlands and ornaments, He assumed a sitting position that He has remained in since. All other deities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are standing; it is only here that He is sitting.

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara

In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara was Lalitā Sakhī. His previous name was Śrī Puruṣottama Ācārya. His father's name was Śrī Padmagarbha Ācārya, whose original residence was in Bhiṭādiyā, and his maternal grandfather was Śrī Jayarāja Cakravartī, who was a resident of Navadvīpa. Jayarāja Cakravartī married his daughter to Śrī Padmagarbha Ācārya. They also settled in Śrī Navadvīpa where Puruṣottama took birth. Some time later Śrī Padmagarbha Ācārya went to Mithilā and Kāśī to study Vedānta, leaving his wife and sons in Navadvīpa. In Kāśī he received Vaiṣṇava initiation from Śrī Mādhavendra Purī's spiritual master Śrī Lakṣmīpati and then returned to Bhiṭādiyā, where he again married.

Puruṣottama was raised in the house of his maternal grandfather in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma and was Śrīman Mahāprabu's fellow student. After Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa* he went to Kāśī where he accepted the renounced order, and was thereafter known as Svarūpa Dāmodara. Although he remained in Kāśī studying the Vedas, Vedānta and other scriptures, he never acquired a taste for the monistic commentary of the Vedānta

propagated by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. As soon as he was able, he left Kāśī and arrived at Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet in Śrī Purī-dhāma.

Svarūpa Dāmodara is the principal member of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's three-and-a-half intimate associates (Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāmānanda Rāya, Śikhi Māhiti and Mādhavī-devī). Not only was he an excellent poet, but he was learned in the scriptures and established philosophical conclusions (*siddhānta*). He sang with great feeling, and was a *rasika* and *bhāvuka* speaker of the *Bhāgavatam*. He was a member of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *kīrtana* party, and was Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi's foremost friend and companion. He strung a garland of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes into his diary (known as a *kaḍacā*) that Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī later spoke to Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī and upon which Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī based his *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. If Śrīman Mahāprabhu heard an expression of any sentiment opposed to the established philosophical conclusions of devotion, opposed to *rasa* or in which there was an overlapping of *rasas*, He experienced distress. Therefore, before a verse or composition was presented to Mahāprabhu, it was shown to Svarūpa Dāmodara.

In accordance with Śrīman Mahāprabhu's inner mood, Svarūpa Dāmodara used to recite the sweet verses and songs of Vidyāpati, Caṇḍīdāsa and Jayadeva Gosvāmī's *Gīta-govinda*. He sang like a Gandharva and was like Bṛhaspati in his knowledge of the scriptures. He was very dear to Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaita Ācārya, and he was the life of Śrīvāsa and the other devotees. Śrīman Mahāprabhu entrusted Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī to his care.

Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita

Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita was Śrīman Mahāprabhu's intimate devotee and a singer in His *kīrtana*. He knew no one other than Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes he was Śrī Kṛṣṇa's principal queen, Satyabhāmā-devī.[1] He used to serve Śrīman Mahāprabhu in Purī-dhāma.

Once Paṇḍitajī went to Bengal and collected from Śivānanda Sena a cooling oil made from fragrant sandalwood paste and other ingredients. He filled a pot with the oil, brought it to Purī-dhāma and gave it to Mahāprabhu's servant, Govinda, saying, "Apply a little of this oil to the Lord's head to minimise the excess of bile and air in His body." Śrīman Mahāprabhu, however, forbade anyone to use the oil on Him. He told Govinda, "With great effort Jagadānanda has brought this oil from Bengal. Give it to the Jagannātha Temple for the Lord's servants to use in the oil-lamps. I'm a *sannyāsī* and cannot accept it." When Govinda again told Mahāprabhu that Jagadānanda had requested Him to use the oil, Mahāprabhu became angry. He retorted, "Why only oil? Why not also arrange for a masseur to massage Me daily with that oil! Did I accept the renounced order for these pleasures? You have nothing to lose if I use that oil, but I will be ruined and all would laugh. I will be labelled a *dārī-sannyāsī*, a tantric renunciant who keeps women."

Jagadānanda was most upset, and the next day he went to see Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He took the pot of oil and smashed it to the ground before the Lord. Oil spread everywhere. Then he returned to his residence, bolted the door and refused to eat or drink for three days. All he did was weep.

Although Mahāprabhu was by nature extremely grave, He was unable to remain calm upon seeing Jagadānanda's reaction. On the morning of the fourth day He went to Jagadānanda's

residence and said, "I'm now on My way to take bath in the ocean, but I'm very hungry. Cook something quickly and I will come back soon." Forgetting all pride, Śrī Jagadānanda took bath and absorbed himself in cooking. He finished in no time and when Mahāprabhu returned Jagadānanda offered Him a beautiful sitting place and *mahā-prasāda*. Mahāprabhu said, "Today we shall honour *mahā-prasāda* together," and silently took His seat. But Jagadānanda turned his face away from Mahāprabhu. "First You should take *prasāda*," he said, "and then I will take." "Alright," the Lord said, "but you must prove true to your word."

"My word will never be proven untrue," Jagadānanda responded. "I could never transgress Your order." The Lord honoured *prasāda* to His complete satisfaction and told Govinda, "Inform Me when Jagadānanda has honoured *prasāda*."

Jagadānanda never approved of the Lord's austere renunciation. When Mahāprabhu took rest He would lie on the ground on His outer garment. One day Jagadānanda brought a saffron-coloured cloth, filled it with soft cotton and laid it where Mahāprabhu usually took rest. "Who has made this bedding?" the Lord asked.

When Govinda told Him it was Jagadānanda the Lord said nothing further, but threw the bedding outside, saying, "Bring a comfortable bed as well. You all want to engage Me in sense gratification, but as a *sannyāsī*, it is proper for Me to stay far away from sense enjoyment."

But Svarūpa Dāmodara supported Jagadānanda and devised another plan to give the Lord some bedding. He tore some bark of a plantain tree into fine fibers and filled an old outer cloth with it. After much coaxing by the devotees Mahāprabhu accepted the bedding.

Everyone was satisfied that the Lord had accepted it – all except Jagadānanda, who was angry inwardly, but appeared happy. Previously Mahāprabhu had rejected Jagadānanda's request to go to Vṛndāvana. Now, concealing his anger and unhappiness, Jagadānanda again asked for permission to go.

The Lord answered, "You're going to Vṛndāvana because you're angry with Me; therefore, you will merely become a beggar and see faults in Me." Jagadānanda repeatedly insisted on receiving Mahāprabhu's permission and finally He gave it.

In Vṛndāvana Jagadānanda stayed with Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī. One day while Jagadānanda was cooking *kichri*, Sanātana Gosvāmī entered the room wearing a red cloth tied around his head. Jagadānanda Paṇḍita thought that this cloth must have been Śrīman Mahāprabhu's remnants, so he asked Sanātana Gosvāmī, "From where did you get this cloth? Did the Lord give it to you?" Sanātana Gosvāmī answered, "Mukunda Sarasvatī gave it to me." Upon hearing that the cloth had come from an *advaitavādī sannyāsī* Jagadānanda burned with anger and losing all control, he raised a cooking pot to beat Sanātana Gosvāmī. Sanātana Gosvāmī became somewhat ashamed so Jagadānanda put down the pot and said, "You are one of Mahāprabhu's chief associates and very dear to Him, yet you wear the cloth of another *sannyāsī*, a renunciant of the impersonalistic school, on your head! I cannot tolerate this." When the exalted Vaiṣṇava, Sanātana Gosvāmī, who was both wise and tolerant, witnessed Jagadānanda's firm faith in Mahāprabhu, he became extremely pleased and told him, "Your fortune is unlimited."

Once, at the time of Ratha-yātrā, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī journeyed to Jagannātha Purī to take *darśana* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. As he travelled through the deep Jhārikhaṇḍa forest, mosquitoes bit him and he drank water from rivers and

canals. Consequently pussy boils developed all over his body. Despite this, Mahāprabhu still lovingly embraced him. This saddened Sanātana Gosvāmī, who forbade Mahāprabhu to embrace him as long as his body was in such a condition. Mahāprabhu, however, did not obey him. Distressed, Sanātana Gosvāmī asked Śrī Jagadānanda what he should do.

Paṇḍitajī replied, "It appears that it is not proper for you to stay here. It would be auspicious for you to return to Vṛndāvana after the Ratha-yātrā." Somehow or other Mahāprabhu found out about this conversation. Displeased, He told Sanātana, "Jagā is a new student, but he has become so proud that he has even begun to instruct you, who are My instructor and like My spiritual master."

Sanātana responded, "Today I can understand how dear Jagadānanda is to You. You make him drink the nectar of Your loving quarrels with him, whereas on the pretext of giving me honour You make me drink bitter neem juice. This is my misfortune."

Śrīman Mahāprabhu became somewhat embarrassed, and to satisfy Sanātana Gosvāmī He said, "Don't think Jagadānanda is more dear to Me than you are, but I'm unable to tolerate the transgression of rules and regulations of etiquette. You are an authority on the scriptures and Jagā is a young boy. The bodies of Vaiṣṇavas are never material. To test Me, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has made your body erupt with these sores. If I didn't embrace your body, I would be committing an offence to a Vaiṣṇava. To Me your body is more fragrant than sandalwood paste from the Malayana mountains."

There is no reference to the exact location of the residences of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Jagadānanda, but it is known that they were close to the residence of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Candraśekhara-bhavana

Śrī Candraśekhara Ācārya was very close to Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He was also known as Ācāryaratna, which means "jewel amongst learned personalities". His place of residence is known as Vraja-pattana. At Candraśekhara-bhavana, in the first dramatic stage performance in the history of Bengal, Śrīman Mahāprabhu danced in the mood of Rukmiṇī.

In 1918 *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established Śrī Caitanya Maṭha at this very location. From this Caitanya Maṭha, branches and sub-branches of *gauḍīya-maṭhas* have been established all over the world, and today it remains the main source of international preaching and propagation of the holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Due to the endeavours of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura the ideology of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is today spreading throughout the whole world. The following words of Śrīman Mahāprabhu (*Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Antya-khaṇḍa* 4.126) have become meaningful in all respects:





Śrī Caitanya Maṭha

pṛthivīte-paryānta yata āche deśa-grāma
sarvatra sañcāra haibeka mora nāma

My holy name will be broadcast in every town and village of this Earth planet.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's samādhi-mandira

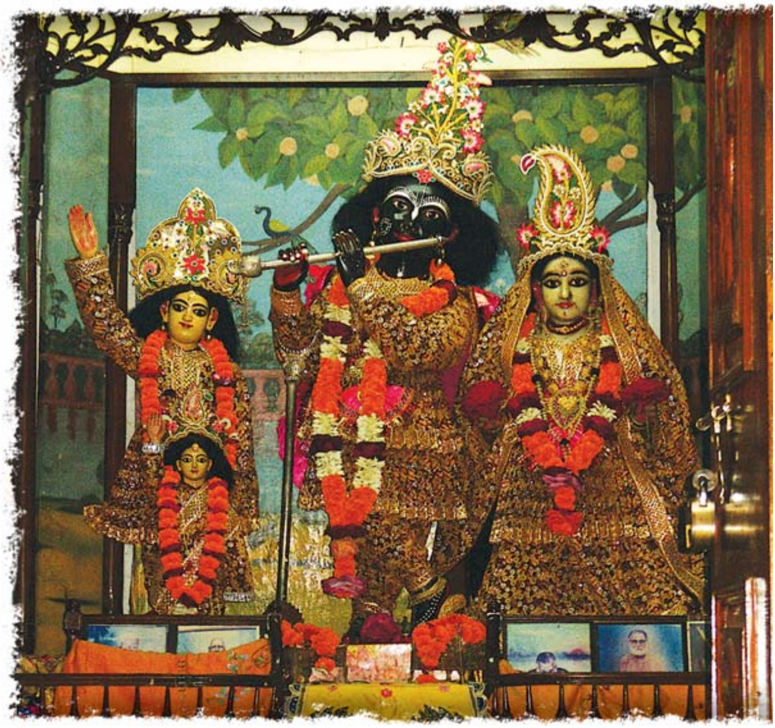
Here is the *samādhi* of the world-famous *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. This exalted, saintly personality (*mahāpuruṣa*) appeared in Purī-dhāma in 1874 on the fifth day of the dark lunar fortnight in the month of Māgha (6th February) and was named Vimala Prasāda. His father was Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his mother, Śrī Bhagavatī-devī. From childhood it was evident that he was a *mahāpuruṣa*, as he exhibited all such symptoms. When Vimala Prasāda was a small child, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura initiated him into the chanting of the holy name and the Nṛsiṁha *mantra*. When he was eight

or nine years old, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave him the *mantra* to worship Śrī Kūrmadeva, who had manifested Himself in a wall of their house, and instructed Vimala Prasāda in worship of Him.

Upon seeing Vimala Prasāda's scholastic brilliance, the academic assembly awarded him the title "Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī". In 1900 at Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja in Śrī Godrumadvīpa, he received initiation from Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, who was a stalwart renunciant devoted to chanting the holy name. In 1918 he accepted *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa*, and at Śrī Gaura-pūrṇimā established Śrī Caitanya Maṭha and installed the deities of Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Śrī Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī. From this place he inaugurated the preaching of *śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma* and *kṛṣṇa-prema*, as practised and propagated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in India and other places around the world.



Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's *samādhi*



The deities of Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Śrī Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī established by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

He re-instituted Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*; bestowed the renounced order upon qualified disciples; published monthly, weekly and daily journals, which propagated Gauḍīya philosophy in various languages such as Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit, Telegu, Tamil, Asamiya and English; published other devotional literatures; and sent out qualified preachers to various places. Thus, in a short time he preached pure devotion in a way that no one had done before. He also established *gauḍīya-maṭhas* in prominent places. At Śrī Gaura's birthplace, the Yogapīṭha, he constructed a grand temple. Then, on 1st January, 1937, he entered Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's *niśānta-līlā* and his own unmanifest pastimes.

Śrīla Gaura-kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's samādhi

Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja was the initiating spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. He used to reside in Vraja at the various places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, such as Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Sūrya-kuṇḍa and Nandagrāma, and he did his *bhajana* there while practising severe renunciation. He then went to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma where he performed *bhajana* in a mood of great separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. To escape the association of materialistic sense enjoyers, he hid in an abandoned latrine built by the municipality of Navadvīpa. He did not open the door for anyone, not even for the District Judge and Police Superintendent who came to see him. But he did open it for our most worshipful spiritual master Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna



Śrīla Gaura-kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's *samādhi*

Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja (at that time Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmacārī). Recognising him as a recipient of the mercy of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, he opened the door with great affection, gave his *darśana* and instructed him to perform pure *bhajana*. Bābājī Mahārāja was a *siddha-mahāpuruṣa*, a perfected, self-realised personality. Due to strong renunciation he became fully blind – externally.[2] Nonetheless, he daily crossed the Gaṅgā, while loudly chanting the holy name, to go to Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja in Godruma to hear *hari-kathā* from Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He left this world on Utthāna-ekādaśī, 17th November, 1915. With his own hands Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura placed his spiritual master in *samādhi* in Nūtana-caḍā in the ancient Kuliyā (present Navadvīpa Town) in accordance with the prescribed rules in the *Samskāra-dīpikā*. After some time the Gaṅgā flooded and fearing that she would wash away the *samādhi* of his spiritual master, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura moved it, re-establishing it on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa at Śrī Caitanya Maṭha.



Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja's *samādhi* temple on the bank of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa

Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Śyāma-kuṇḍa

Śrīla Prabhupāda manifested Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Śyāma-kuṇḍa next to Candraśekhara-bhavana on the banks of the ancient Śrī Pṛthu-kuṇḍa, or Ballāla-dīghī. There, in a mood of deep separation, he used to perform *bhajana* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Gaurasundara. The mere sight of these two ponds



Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa



Śrī Śyāma-kuṇḍa with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's *samādhi* temple in the background

causes memories of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa in Vraja to arise in the heart. Nearby is a dense jackfruit tree under which Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmacārī would sit while supervising Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda's estate and managing Śrī Caitanya Maṭha.



The jackfruit tree under which Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmacārī would sit



The area of Ballāla-dīghī

Pṛthu-kuṇḍa, or Ballāla-dīghī

East of Gaṅgā-nagara was a beautiful pond that people called Ballāla-dīghī. In Satya-yuga there lived a very glorious emperor named Pṛthu. Pṛthu Mahārāja was an empowered incarnation of the Supreme Lord, a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*. He levelled hilly parts of the Earth to make it suitable for the people to live on and support themselves by agricultural activities. He arrived at this place intending to level it, when he saw a powerful effulgent light emanating in all directions. To understand this mysterious light, he entered meditation.

In his meditation he saw that this was Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa, which is non-different from Vṛndāvana. In the coming Kali-yuga the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara, Himself would appear at this very place as Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari. To accomplish His own purposes He

would accept the lustre and inner sentiments of His beloved Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. He would perform various kinds of loving pastimes with His associates and disseminate the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name throughout the world, bestowing *kṛṣṇa-prema* upon all. Pṛthu Mahārāja also received Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *darśana*, and Mahāprabhu ordered him to keep the glories of this place hidden for now. He also told him to construct a beautiful pond here, which later became known as Pṛthu-kuṇḍa, renown for the purity and sweetness of its waters.

Later Śrī Lakṣmaṇa Sena became the king of this place. He enlarged and deepened the pond, and named it Ballāla-dīghī after his father Ballāla Sena. The ruins of Mahārāja Lakṣmaṇa Sena's palace (and Ballāla Sena's) are still seen today in the neighbourhood behind Chand Kazi's *samādhi*.



The ruins of Ballāla Sena's palace



Śrī Murārī Gupta's residence

Murārī Gupta's Śrī Rāma-Sītā temple and residence are situated east of the Yogapīṭha Temple on what was previously the bank of Ballāla-dīghī. He was Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associate and fellow student. Accomplished in all arts, he was an expert dancer, a sweet singer and the author of *Śrī Caitanya-caritra*.

Murārī Gupta took birth in a famous family of ayurvedic doctors in the district of Śrīhaṭṭa. Later he went to live in Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa. Although he was a few years older than Mahāprabhu, and studied in a higher grade, and although he was a sharp, intelligent student, Nimāī would sometimes defeat him in their debates on *nyāya-śāstra*, the scriptures of logic. When Murārī Gupta established an axiom, Nimāī refuted it. And when Nimāī established one, Murārī refuted it. Although Nimāī was defeated, He praised Murārī for his astute intelligence and scriptural knowledge.

When Śrīman Mahāprabhu returned from Gayā, Murārī Gupta joined His *saṅkīrtana* party and danced as he performed *kīrtana* in the houses of Śrīvāsa and in the houses of other devotees. When Murārī's sweet voice would chant *Bhāgavatam* verses, Śrīman Mahāprabhu became immersed in ecstasy and both He and Murārī Gupta would weep. Once in Murārī's house Śrīman Mahāprabhu revealed His Śrī Varāha form to him.

In Śrī Rāma's pastimes Murārī Gupta was Hanumān, the Lord's unparalleled servant, and had exclusive faith in Śrī Rāma. Once, to test Murārī's one-pointed devotion to Rāma, Śrīman Mahāprabhu explained the ultimate truth that Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of all lords. He described Śrī Kṛṣṇa's unequalled virtues and His four unique qualities that are not found in any of His other incarnations. Thus inspired,



Photo courtesy Śrīmatī Mañjarī dāsī

Śrī Murārī Gupta's original deities

Murārī became enthused to worship Kṛṣṇa and returned to his home. The next morning, however, he approached Śrīman Mahāprabhu with an agitated heart and fell at His feet, weeping. "I see no alternative but to take my life," he said. "Yesterday I embraced Your instruction to worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa because my ultimate duty is to follow Your order, but at the same time I have dedicated my life to the lotus feet Śrī Rāmacandra. Just trying to imagine giving up my service to Śrī Rāmacandra tears my heart to pieces. Last night my mind gave me no peace, for on one hand I cannot leave Śrī Rāmacandra and on the other hand I cannot transgress Your order. Under these circumstances it is only befitting for me to die." Śrīman Mahāprabhu became completely satisfied upon seeing Murārī Gupta's one-pointed devotion to Śrī Rāma and ordered him to continue his worship of Him.

Once, Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu were sitting together in Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's house. Murārī Gupta first paid his obeisances to Gauracandra and then to Nityānanda Prabhu. This did not please Śrīman Mahāprabhu who told him, "You have transgressed Vaiṣṇava etiquette." That night Mahāprabhu entered Murārī's dream and spoke to him of the glories of Nityānanda Prabhu. "Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu is *akhaṇḍa guru-tattva*, the original undivided truth of the spiritual master. First, the devotee worships the spiritual master and then he worships the Supreme Lord. If a devotee transgresses this order the Supreme Lord does not accept his worship of Him." The next morning Murārī first offered his obeisances to Nityānanda Prabhu and then to Mahāprabhu. This greatly satisfied Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Murārī Gupta was a very famous ayurvedic doctor, and people from afar used to come to him for treatment. In reality,

however, he was a doctor who cured the disease of material existence.

Sometimes, while absorbed in ecstasy, Śrīman Mahāprabhu assumed the mood of four-armed Lord Nārāyaṇa. Murārī Gupta then assumed the mood of Garuḍa, and Mahāprabhu climbed on to his shoulders.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu left for Purī after taking *sannyāsa*, Murārī Gupta would travel there yearly for the Ratha-yātrā festival.

Śrī Īśodyāna,
or Śrī Nandana Ācārya's residence

Iśodyāna is on the southern boundary of Antardvīpa at the confluence of the rivers Gaṅgā and Sarasvatī (Khaḍiyā River), and is situated between them. There was a beautiful garden here in which deer, blue cows and other smaller forest animals used to roam.

Śrī Nandana Ācārya lived and performed his *bhajana* here. Once, Nityānanda Prabhu came to this house and hid. He thought, "If My younger brother Kanhaiyā has really appeared as Gaurāṅga, He will personally come here to meet Me." Understanding Nityānanda Prabhu's desire, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to this place with some of His associates. At Their first meeting the two brothers were overjoyed and became surcharged with spiritual happiness. Later, Mahāprabhu brought Nityānanda to Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, and from that time on Nityānanda remained with the Lord. Both are "the Lord (*īśa*) of lords", and therefore Their meeting place is known as Īśodyāna, "the garden of the two Lords".



The Gauḍīya-maṭhas at Īśodyāna in Māyāpura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

Today, on the eastern side of the Gaṅgā, there is a beautiful "mountain range" of *gauḍīya-maṭhas* beginning from Śrī Yogapīṭha-Māyāpura and ending in the south at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Jālaṅgī (Khaḍīyā River).

Jagad-guru nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda was an illustrious *ācārya* and scholar in the Brahma-Mādhva-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava line. He knew several languages, was a natural poet, a distinguished writer and was fully conversant with *bhakti-tattva* and other philosophical principles. He was a fearless, expert speaker of the impartial truth, and could sharply refute the *sahajiyās* (who are opposed to *bhakti*) and the impersonalists. His explanations of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* were both relishable and filled with philosophical conclusions. He was an unequalled preacher and *ācārya* of the chanting of the holy name and distributing love of Godhead as preached and practised by Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Through the mercy of this great personality it has become possible to preach Mahāprabhu's message throughout the



world, and centres, temples, *maṭhas* and *āśramas*, which disseminate pure devotional service, have been established everywhere. Many devotional literatures, such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gītā*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* and *Jaiva-dharma*, have been published in the world's major languages. He empowered his many qualified disciples with the transcendental potency to deliver the people of this material

world. Within a short period of time they preached pure devotional service throughout the world, thus fulfilling the desire of their worshipful spiritual master.

The following *sannyāsīs* and *ācāryas* are some of the well-known disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda: Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Pradīpa Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvara Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānas Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Kevala Auḍulomī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Prakāśa Araṇya Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Āśrama Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Sarvasva Giri Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Sudhīra Yācaka Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhastanemi Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Svarūpa Parvata Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Kusuma Śravaṇa Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Bhaktyāloka Paramahaṁsa Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Saurabha Sāra Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja and Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja. After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance they opened their own *gauḍīya-maṭhas* to preach pure devotional service throughout the world. In this way they fulfilled Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's innermost desire.

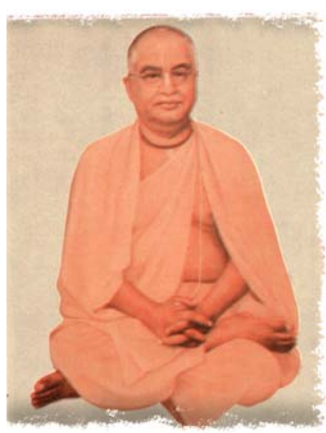
Our most worshipful Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja established the grand Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja established Śrī Caitanya Sārasvata Gauḍīya Maṭha, and Śrīla Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Mahārāja established Śrī Gauḍīya Āsana and Mission. These *maṭhas* are all in Koladvīpa (the present town of Navadvīpa). Śrīmad Bhakti

Kevala Auḍulomi Mahārāja established Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Godruma. On the Gaṅgā's eastern bank, beginning from Yogapīṭha-Māyāpura up to the confluence of the Gaṅgā and Khaḍiyā River, there is a beautiful chain of temples. The prominent among them are listed below.



Śrī Yogapīṭha-Māyāpura

After the disappearance of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrī Yogapīṭha-Māyāpura, Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, Śrī Advaita-bhavana, Śrī Caitanya Maṭha (Candraśekhara-bhavana) and other places came under the care of Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja. Numerous *gauḍīya-maṭhas* were also managed under his guidance.

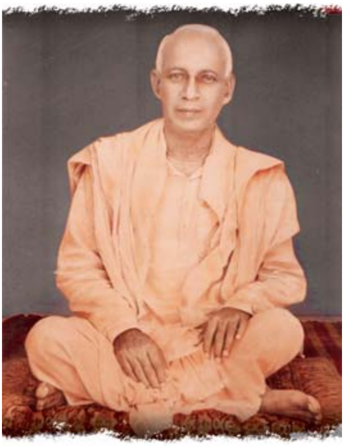


Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja

Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja had received initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda in his youth and tolerated much hardship to render him extensive service. After Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Mahārāja entered his unmanifest pastimes, Śrīmad Tīrtha Mahārāja accepted the renounced order from *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Bhakti Vijñāna Āśrama Mahārāja. In Śrīla Prabhupāda's time, Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja was the secretary of all the *maṭhas*, and after Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance he became the *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha.

Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara Āśrama

This *āśrama* was established by Śrī Rasānanda Vana Mahārāja, a disciple of *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Mahārāja, who was a prominent disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Mahārāja established "Bhajana-kuṭī" in Śrī Vṛndāvana, and founded the College of Oriental Studies at Ramaṇa-retī, Vṛndāvana. Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda sent him to preach pure devotion to the Western world, in countries like England, France, Germany and Spain.



Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Mahārāja

Śrī Gauḍīya Āśrama

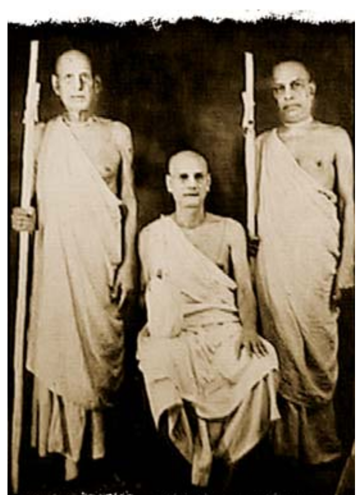
This *āśrama* was established by a disciple of *tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhakti Svarūpa Parvata Mahārāja (a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda). Śrīmad Parvata Mahārāja preached in Udālā, Orissa, where he established Udālā Gauḍīya Maṭha.



ISKCON Māyāpura

Śrī Caitanya-Candrodaya Mandira

Nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja established this extensive temple in Īśodyāna, Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. He was initiated by *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in 1933 and in 1966 founded the world-famous International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness (ISKCON), which has many hundreds of temples all over the world.



Śrī Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja (right) at the *sannyāsa* ceremony in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha

Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, who was born in 1896 in the city of Kolkata, was highly religious from childhood. On the order of his spiritual master he wrote essays in English and sent them to his magazine for publication. After giving up his home, wife, children and all else, he accepted the renounced

order in 1959 at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā from *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He translated *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Gītā* into English, and to fulfil his spiritual master's innermost desire he went to the United States of America in 1965 to preach pure devotion. There he composed authoritative translations and explanations of devotional literature and wrote several other books. He left this world on 14th November, 1977. At present thousands of his disciples and grand-disciples are preaching the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and pure devotion all over the world.

There is a plan to build a great Vedic temple here so devotees from all over the world can continue to study Vedic culture.

Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda Mandira (Śrī Nandana Ācārya-bhavana)


Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Mahārāja

This temple was established by Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, a prominent disciple of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. He was exclusively devoted to Prabhupāda's service. He was a powerful speaker and an excellent writer, and had countless other good qualities. He was the editor and managing director of the weekly *Gauḍīya*, which was established by Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Śrīla Prabhupāda sent him to the Western countries to preach the message of Mahāprabhu and pure devotional service. After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance he established preaching-centres in Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana, Delhi, Jagannātha Purī, Māyāpura and other places.

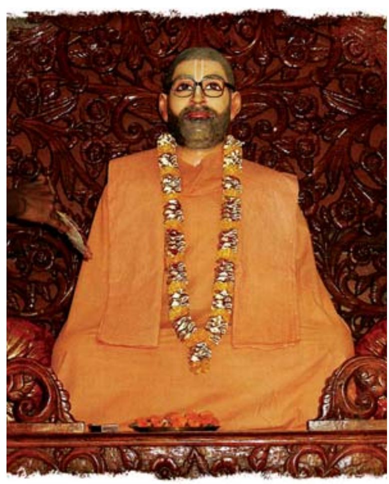


The front gate of Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda Mandira

During the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu there was a very beautiful garden here where Śrī Nandana Ācārya built his home and performed *bhajana*. After Śrī Nityānanda Prabbhu had visited the holy places of India he came to Nandana Ācārya's house and hid. His motive for hiding was, "If Nimāī Paṇḍita really is Śrī Nanda-nandana, He is omniscient and will certainly know that I have arrived. Then He will personally come here to meet Me." And so it happened. That evening Nimāī Paṇḍita, along with some of His prominent associates, came here to meet Nityānanda Prabhu for the first time in *caitanya-līlā*. They became so deeply absorbed in the moods of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma that They lost consciousness. Thereafter Śrī Nimāī Paṇḍita took Nityānanda Prabhu to Śrīvāsa-aṅgana where all the devotees were delighted to meet Him. Śrīmatī Mālinī-devī, Śrīvāsa's wife, cared for Nityānanda as her own son in every respect, and thus raised Him.



Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha



Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja

Tridaṇḍi-svāmī Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja, one of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's prominent disciples and an influential *ācārya*, is the founder of this *maṭha*. His *brahmacārī* name was Śrī Hayagrīva Brahmacārī. After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance he accepted the renounced order from *parivrājakācārya* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānasa Mahārāja. He established preaching-centres in Bengal, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and other places in India, from which to spread the message of Lord Caitanya. He

also established centres of *bhakti* in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, Śrī Purī-dhāma and Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. He published a monthly Bengali magazine called *Caitanya-vāṇī*, and many authoritative and ancient religious scriptures. His *samādhi* is here.



Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavat Maṭha

This *maṭha* was established by *parivrājakācārya* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvara Mahārāja, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's last *sannyāsī* disciple. By nature he was a very simple-hearted

Vaiṣṇava and an exceptionally sweet singer. People were deeply moved by his beautiful *saṅkīrtana*. He established preaching-centres in Medinīpura, Kāṅthi, Candrakoṇā Town and Māyāpura. His place of *bhajana* and his *samādhi* are here.



Śrīmad B.V. Yāyāvara Mahārāja

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya Maṭha

The founder of this *maṭha* is *parivrājakācārya* Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja, a disciple of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. He took birth in 1899 in East Bengal (Bangladesh) in Vājitapura village of the Magārīpura subdivision of the Harīpura district. His father's name was Śrī Pārvatīnātha Sanyāla and his mother's name was Svarṇamayī-devī. He received his primary education in Vājitapura and his higher education in Kolkata. While engaged in his former occupation as co-editor of the



famous daily *Amṛta-bazara* of Kolkata he would frequently attend the lectures of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī in the city's Śrī Bāgabāzāra Gauḍīya Maṭha. He was so influenced by Śrīla Prabhupāda's *hari-kathā* that he gave up his home, family, work and everything else to take full shelter of Prabhupāda's lotus feet. In Śrīla Prabhupāda's time he bore the responsibility of managing several *maṭhas*. After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance he resided with our spiritual master, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, in Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. He was the editor of the Samiti's main journal, the *Gauḍīya Patrikā*, and he also preached in various parts of India. He later established preaching-centres in the town of Vardhamāna and Īśodyāna in Māyāpura. He was an influential speaker and commentator of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He entered *aprakaṭa-līlā* in 1991 on Gaura-daśamī. His *samādhi* is situated here.



Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja

Śrī Gopīnātha Gauḍīya Maṭha

This *maṭha* was established by *parivrājakācārya tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja. In Śrīla Prabhupāda's time he wrote articles for the daily *Nadiyā-prakāśa* and other weekly and monthly religious magazines. Śrī Purī Mahārāja was also a great preacher of *bhakti-dharma* and an influential speaker of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Before accepting the renounced order his name was Śrī Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī. After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance he spent a long time with our spiritual master, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava





Śrī Gopīnātha Gauḍīya Maṭha (top) and Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja's samādhi (left)

Gosvāmī Mahārāja, in Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. He later founded Śrī Vāsudeva Gauḍīya Maṭha in Ambikā-kālanā, from where he

preached pure *bhakti* throughout India. He frequently stayed with the *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja, and was the President of the Editorial Board of their journal, *Caitanya-vāṇī*. He entered *aprakaṭa-līlā* on 22nd November, 1999, in Jagannātha Purī. His *samādhi* is here.

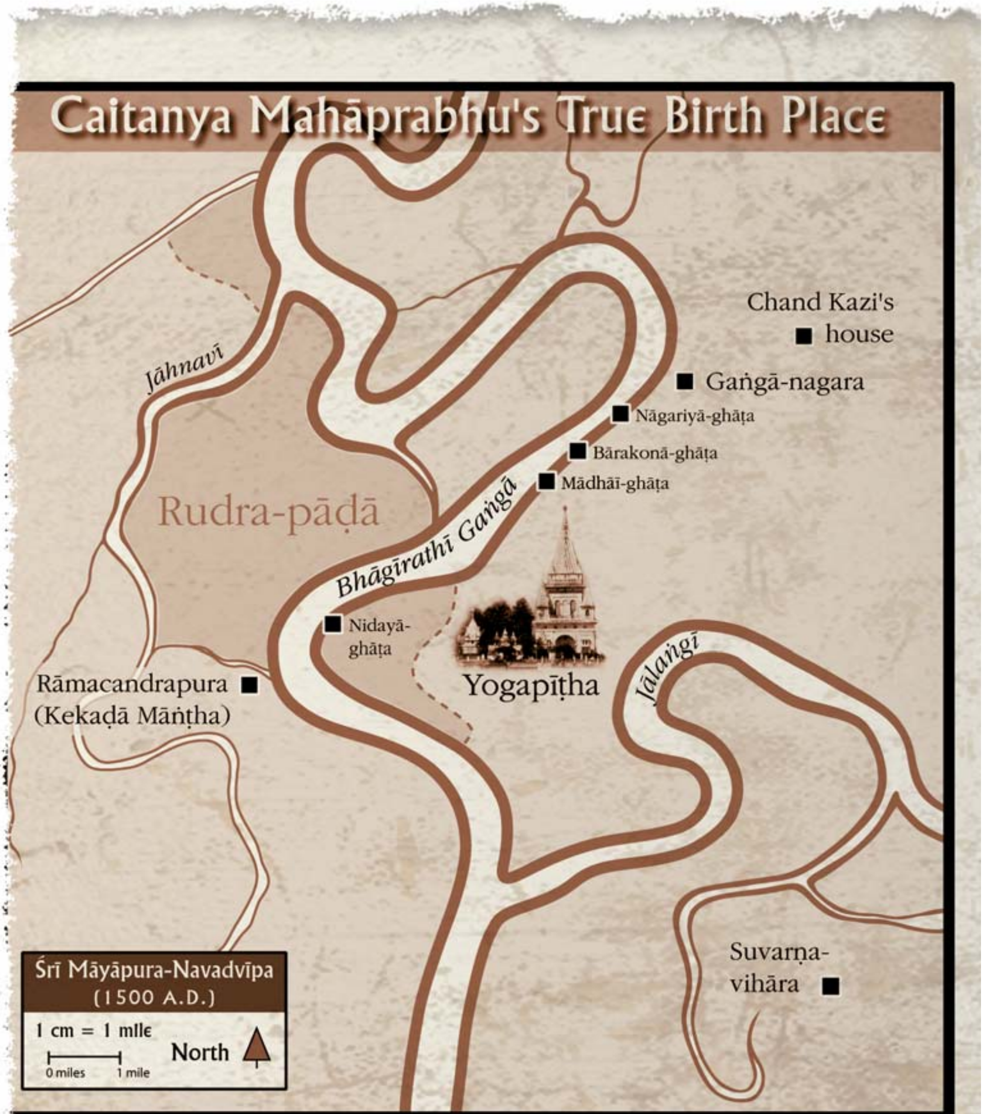
Śrī Gaurāṅga Gauḍīya Maṭha

This *maṭha* was established by Śrīla Bhakti Saurabha Sāra Mahārāja, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda. After Prabhupāda's disappearance, Śrīla Sāra Mahārāja accepted *sannyāsa* from Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the founder of Śrī Gauḍīya Saṅgha. After Śrīmad Gosvāmī Mahārāja's disappearance he served as the *ācārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Saṅgha for some time. He was very humble, learned in the philosophical conclusions of *bhakti*, and greatly adept in writing and speaking.

Śrī Paramahaṁsa Gauḍīya Maṭha

This *maṭha* was established by disciples of *parivrājakācārya* Bhaktyaloka Paramahaṁsa Mahārāja, a disciple of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. He was a very simple-hearted Vaiṣṇava and would always chant the holy name. During Prabhupāda's time he was the manager of the Gauḍīya Printing Press in Kṛṣṇa-nagara, which produced the *Nadiyā-prakāśa* and other publications. For some time he also looked after the estate in Śrī Māyāpura. After Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance he stayed with our spiritual master, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, in Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. He later established a *maṭha* in Kolkata, where he took up his residence. This *maṭha* (Śrī Paramahaṁsa Gauḍīya Maṭha) has been named after him.

Many other *maṭhas* besides those mentioned here have been established or are being established in this area.



▲ "It was on the east of the Bhagirathi and on the west of the Jalangi."
Hunter's Statistical Account, 16th century

The Geographical Location of Old Navadvīpa

[There has been a centuries old controversy regarding the location of Old Navadvīpa, Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace. The information in this section comes from the book *Citre-navadvīpa* by Śrī Śaradindu Nārāyaṇa Rāya (published by Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, Māyāpura). This information gives conclusive proof that Old Navadvīpa was situated on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā. The English excerpts from the above-mentioned book have been quoted directly. – ed.]

By studying scriptures such as *Urddhāmnāya Mahā-tantra*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Bhakti-ratnākara* it is clear that Old Navadvīpa was situated on the Gaṅgā's (Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī's) eastern bank. The *Urddhāmnāya Mahā-tantra* states:

vartateha navadvīpe nityadhāmni maheśvari
bhāgīrathī taṭepūrve māyāpurantu gokulam

O Maheśvari, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is eternal, and Māyāpura, which is situated on the Bhāgīrathī's eastern bank, is the same as Gokula.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Ādi-līlā* 1.86) states: "... *gauḍadeśe pūrva-śaile karilā udaya* – ... they arose on the eastern horizon in the land of Gauḍa." And *Ādi-līlā* 13.97 states: "*nadīyā-udayagiri, pūrṇacandra gaurahari, kṛpā kari' ha-ila udaya* – thus by His causeless mercy the full moon, Gaurahari, rose in the district of Nadīyā, which is compared to Udayagiri, where the sun first becomes visible."

Śrī Navadvīpa-parikramā by Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī states:

śrī-suradhunīra pūrva-tīre
antardvīpādika catuṣṭaya śobhākare
jāhnavīra paścikulete
koladvīpādika pañca vikhyāta jagate

Antardvīpa and three other islands are situated in full splendour on the eastern bank of the Suradhunī (Gaṅgā), and

> Koladvīpa and four other famous islands are on the Jāhnavī's (Gaṅgā's) western bank.

In the 16th century, during the British Empire's occupation of India, Sir William Hunter produced an authoritative historical and geographical record of India, focusing on many well known places in Bengal. In this record (*Hunter's Statistical Account*, pg 142) he described the geographical position of Navadvīpa Town:

> "It was on the east of the Bhagirathi and on the west of the Jalangi."

In other words, Navadvīpa Town was situated on Bhāgīrathī's eastern bank and Jālangī's western bank.

From the explanations in the *Nadiya Gazetteer* one can understand that Navadvīpa was the capital of the kings of the Sena dynasty:

> "Nabadwip is a very ancient city and is reported to have been founded in A.D. 1063 by one of the Sen kings of Bengal. In the *Aini Akbari* it is noted that in the time of Lakhana Sen, Nadia was the Capital of Bengal."

In other words, Navadvīpa is an ancient city, said to be founded in 1063 by a king of the Sena dynasty. *Āini Akbarī* also mentions that Navadvīpa was the capital of Bengal during the reign of Mahārāja Śrī Lakṣmaṇa Sena.

In his *Statistical Account* (pg. 142) Sir William Hunter also has mentioned that Mahārāja Lakṣmaṇa Sena founded Nadīyā in A.D. 1063.

The following statement appeared in the *Calcutta Review* (pg. 398, 1946):

> "The earliest that we know of Nadia is that in 1203 it was the Capital of Bengal."

In other words, our first information about Nadīyā Town is that it was the capital of Bengal in 1203. In this way much proof supports the fact that old Nadīyā, or old Navadvīpa, was the capital of the kings of the Sena dynasty and was situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank.

The *Nadiya District Gazetteer* provides further evidence:

> "The nature of Mahammadi Baktier's conquest (A.D. 1203) appears to have been exaggerated. The expedition to Nadia was only on in-road, a dash for securing booty. The troopers looted the city with the palace and went away. They did not take possession of the part. It seems probable that the hold of Mohammedans upon the part of Bengal in which Nadia district lies was very slight for the two centuries which succeeded the sack of Navadwip by Baktier Khan. It appears, however, that by the middle of the fifteenth century the independent Mahammedan Kings of Bengal had established their authority."

It seems that the description of the conquest of Navadvīpa by Baktiyāra Khān (1203) was exaggerated. The sole reason Baktiyāra Khān invaded Nadīyā was to loot its riches. It was a sudden attack in which the cavalry plundered the royal palace and Navadvīpa Town, and then left. They never established any authority over the town, although it is possible that after their attack on Navadvīpa, Baktiyāra Khān was its authority in name only. If so, this authority lasted for the duration of two centuries. In the middle of the 15th century the independent Muslim emperors established their authority over Bengal.

Nadiya Gazetteer and *Hunter's Statistical Account* (pg. 142) clearly prove that the highland adjacent to present Māyāpura is actually the ruins of King Ballāla Sena's palace and that Nadīyā Town was his capital. Ballāla-dīghī (Pṛthu-kuṇḍa) was situated nearby.

Over time, the course of the Gaṅgā's flow occasionally changed and gradually it washed away the old Navadvīpa Town, which was later founded again on the western bank. Old Navadvīpa, or Nadīyā Town, is now known by various names, such as Brāhmaṇa-pukura, Bel-pukura, Śrī Māyāpura, Ballāla-dīghī and Śrīnāthapura. The present Śrīdhāma Māyāpura is where Śrī Jagannātha Miśra's house, Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, Advaita-bhavana, Murārī Gupta-bhavana and other places were situated. The place known as Kuliyā-grāma (or Pahāḍa-pura) during Mahāprabhu's time, is where the present Navadvīpa Town and Municipality are situated. Old maps give evidence of this.

Bhakti-ratnākara is an old and authoritative scripture which was composed by the well-known Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura. In its description of Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, *Bhakti-ratnākara* gives clear evidence to support that Antardvīpa Māyāpura, which was situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank, was the old Nadīyā, or Navadvīpa Town. Even today Chand Kazi's *samādhi*, Śrīdhara-aṅgana and other places are situated on the eastern bank. When Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura performed *parikramā* with Īśāna Ṭhākura, they visited Jagannātha-bhavana and the nearby Bārakonā-ghāṭa, Gaṅgā-nagara and so forth, and without crossing the Gaṅgā, they went to Chand Kazi's *samādhi*, Śrīdhara-aṅgana, Simuliyā and other places.

In 1684 William Hayes, an agent of the East India Company, wrote in his diary about Richard Temple's old map, which also shows that Navadvīpa Town was situated on Bhāgīrathī's eastern bank.

In 1572, Kavi-karṇapūra wrote his famous play *Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya*. From the geographical description given there it is clear that the old Navadvīpa, or Nadīyā Town, was situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank and that Kuliyā-grāma was situated on the western bank.

Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura compiled *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* just a few years after the disappearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. From the descriptions in this book one can get to know the geographical location of Navadvīpa and nearby places. Everyone accepts that the *samādhi* of Chand Kazi, who was a contemporary of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, is situated in Vāmana-pukura (also known as Brāhmaṇa-pukura and Brāhmaṇa-puṣkariṇī). According to *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata's* narration of Chand Kazi's defeat, Śrīman Mahāprabhu took a large *saṅkīrtana* party to Chand Kazi's residence, but there is no mention that they crossed the Gaṅgā.

From the above-mentioned proofs it is clear that the place indicated by Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Śrī Māyāpura-dhāma is the actual place of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance.

Some people say that Rāmacandrapura, or Kekaḍā Māṅṭha, situated on the Gaṅgā's western bank, is the actual site of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance and is therefore the ancient Māyāpura. This assumption, however, is completely baseless and opposed to the above proofs. Some reasons for this, in brief, are:

(1) If Rāmacandrapura were Mahāprabhu's appreance-place and Chand Kazi's house was on the other side of the Gaṅgā, Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His *kīrtana* party would have had to cross the Gaṅgā to go from Rāmacandrapura to the Kazi's house on the day of the Kazi's defeat. But *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* does not mention that Śrīman Mahāprabhu crossed the Gaṅgā.

(2) To go from Rāmacandrapura to the Kazi's house in Vāmana-pukura via Gaṅgā-nagara, one has to go through Rudra-pāḍā. There is no alternate route. Śrīman Mahāprabhu led the *saṅkīrtana* party through many *ghāṭas* on the banks of the Gaṅgā. Then, finally arriving

at Gaṅgā-nagara, He came to the Kazi's house. If the *saṅkīrtana* party had started at Rāmacandrapura, the distance travelled would have been 6–8 miles.

(3) In the narration of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's *parikramā* it is mentioned that he went to Simuliyā (Sīmantadvīpa) from Antardvīpa. Even today, the Kazi's house and *samādhi* are on the path from present Māyāpura (Antardvīpa) to Simuliyā. If we take Rāmacandrapura to be Antardvīpa Māyāpura, however, then to reach Simuliyā from there one must surely cross Rudra-pāḍā, or Rudradvīpa. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya finally arrived in Rudradvīpa after going to Jānnagara (Jahnudvīpa), then to Māmagāchi (Modadrumdvīpa) and Mahatpura (Mātāpura), etc. If Śrīnivāsa Ācārya had begun his Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* from Rāmacandrapura, how would he have reached Simuliyā first, and then Gādīgāchā (Godrumadvīpa) and Majīdā (Madhyadvīpa), and after crossing the Gaṅgā, Kuliyā (Koladvīpa), Rātudvīpa-Rātupura (Ṛtudvīpa), Jānnagara (Jahnudvīpa), Māmagāchi (Modadrumadvīpa) and finally Rudra-pāḍā (Rudradvīpa)? Consequently, it must be concluded that he started his *parikramā* from the present Antardvīpa Māyāpura situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank. This conclusion is in accordance with the description given in *Bhakti-ratnākara* and with old maps.

(4) It is mentioned in *Bhakti-ratnākara* that one can see Suvarṇa-vihāra from Antardvīpa. Even today one can see Suvarṇa-vihāra from the present Māyāpura. But if Rāmacandrapura is considered to be Antardvīpa it is impossible to see Suvarṇa-vihāra, which is situated about 5–6 miles away.

(5) If Rāmacandrapura is the place of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance, and if Gaṅgā-Govinda Singh

considered that place to be Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birth-place and built a temple there, why are the deities of Śrī Rāma-Sītā established in this temple? Why didn't he establish a deity of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and why didn't he call this place Māyāpura? And why is this place known as Rāmacandrapura on the old government maps?

(6) It is well-known that there is a huge Śrī Rāma-Sītā festival celebrated with great pomp in Rāmacandrapura. This Rāmacandrapura is situated within Modadruma-dvīpa, Śrī Rāmacandra and Sītājī's pastime-place. Hence, this place cannot also be assumed to be Antardvīpa Māyāpura.

These and other facts (unstated to avoid increasing the size of this book) give clear proof that Rāmacandrapura, or Kekaḍā Māṅṭha, is definitely not Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance-place.



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Antardvīpa Māyāpura

Śrī Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's eternal intimate associate, is revered as the Seventh Gosvāmī who again inaugurated the flow of the Bhāgīrathī of *bhakti*. He appeared in this world to manifest Mahāprabhu's holy name (*gaura-nāma*), His innermost desire (*gaura-kāma*) and His holy abode (*gaura-dhāma*). Like Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana, he wanted to reside in Vraja and perform *bhajana* there. On his way to Vraja-maṇḍala he came to a deity of Lord Śiva, Mahādeva Śrī Tāḍakeśvara, a short distance from Kolkata. That night Śrī Mahādeva appeared



Śrī Tāḍakeśvara

to him in a dream and requested him to reveal Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's appearance-place. He also told him to remain in Gauḍa-maṇḍala and perform *bhajana*. Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura placed Śrī Tāḍakeśvara's instruction upon his head and returned to Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa. There, in Godrumadvīpa, he constructed a small hut and began performing *bhajana*, eager to find Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance-place. He wrote in his autobiography:

"I was very anxious to find Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance-place. I went to Navadvīpa (the present Navadvīpa Town) and with much endeavour made some investigation, but was unable to find any trace of it. Thus I became very unhappy. Nowadays the people of Navadvīpa are only busy filling their bellies. They know nothing about Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastime-places, nor do they endeavour to learn about them. One day after twilight, at ten o'clock, Kamala and I, together with one clerk, were standing on the roof of the Rani Dharmaśālā looking about. It

was very dark and the sky was filled with clouds. Then, across the Gaṅgā towards the north I saw an effulgent mansion. I asked Kamala, 'Did you see something?' He answered, 'I became awestruck to see an effulgent mansion on the other side of the Gaṅgā towards the north.' In the morning I again went to the roof of the Rani Dharmaśālā and attentively looked towards that place. I was unable to see the effulgent mansion, but I could see a palm tree there. When I inquired from others about that place, they said it was called Ballāla-dīghī and that one can still see many traces of King Lakṣmaṇa Sena's old fort there. The coming Monday I went to Kṛṣṇa-nagara and the following Saturday I went straight from there to Ballāla-dīghī. That night I beheld a wondrous sight. Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Gadādhara and the other devotees were completely absorbed in chanting and dancing ecstatically. Everyone's eyes were filled with tears. The tumultuous sound of "Hari Bol!" and the sound of *mṛdaṅgas* and *kartālas* maddened the devotees. After sometime that sight disappeared from my eyes.

"The next day I walked to those places to take *darśana* of them and asked the elderly locals about them. They told me that this was Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace. I visited all the small villages mentioned in *Bhakti-ratnākara* as well as those mentioned in Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*. Thereafter I sat in Kṛṣṇa-nagara and compiled the book *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* and sent it to be printed in Kolkata. I told Śrī Dvārikā Bābū, an engineer from Kṛṣṇa-nagara, about my findings. He could understand everything I said and on the strength of his intelligence he produced a map of Śrī Navadvīpa-maṇḍala. I wandered throughout Navadvīpa-dhāma and wrote the *Dhāma-mahātmya*, because at that time I could do nothing else."

In Godruma, 1893, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura performed a great *harināma-saṅkīrtana* festival under the auspices of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. At that time Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja went with many Vaiṣṇavas to take *darśana* of Śrī Māyāpura. Overwhelmed by ecstatic sentiments, he himself pointed out Mahāprabhu's birthplace, the lost Yogapīṭha-Māyāpura. The 144-year-old Bābājī Mahārāja became overwhelmed with ecstasy and jumped into the air, crying out, "This is the birthplace of Gauracandra, our very life and soul!" Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, many famous writers of Bengal, many high-posted government officers, editors of famous magazines and others witnessed the event. Amongst them was Śrī Śyāmalāla Gosvāmī, the great and erudite Vaiṣṇava. Also present were Śrī Śaśībhūṣaṇa Gosvāmī, Śrī Rādhikānātha Gosvāmī, Śrī Vipina Bihārī Gosvāmī, Śrī Rāya Vanamālī, Śrī Rāya Bahādura, Śrī Śiśīra Kumāra Ghoṣa, Śrī Dvārikānātha Sarakāra and Śrī Naphara Kumāra. Some huts were eventually made here and the temple construction began. Gradually, faithful devotees from the various states of India came here to take *darśana* and now, crowds of people come from all over the world to this holy place.

[1] Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita used to exhibit *māna* (sulky mood) like Śrī Kṛṣṇa's queen Satyabhāmā. Therefore Mahāprabhu would tease him by telling him he is Satyabhāmā, although Jagadānanda Paṇḍita himself states in *Prema-vivarta* that he is a *rādhā-dāsī*, a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

One may wonder whether Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita is an incarnation of Satyabhāmā or a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He is in fact both, just as Rāmānanda Rāya is Viśākhā as well as Arjuna Sakhī and Arjuna Sakhā. Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita is simultaneously Satyabhāmā and a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the latter being his more prominent identity.

[2] Externally Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja was fully blind, but he was not blind internally. We say he was blind because we ourselves are spiritually blind. In fact he always saw Śrīman Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple in his heart.

He used to wander here and there. On one very dark night when Māyāpura was flooded, Bābājī Mahārāja travelled from Navadvīpa to Māyāpura to meet with Prabhupāda Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Prabhupāda asked him, "O Gurudeva, how did you find your way here on such a dark night?" He replied, "I met one boy who brought me here." Who was that boy? He was none other than Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.



Chapter 2

Śrī Sīmantadvīpa

This island is also called Simuliyā. It consists of Śyenaḍāṅgā, a part of Vāmana-pukura (Brāhmaṇa-puṣkariṇī), Rājapūta, Mullāpāḍā, Viṣṇu-nagara, Saraḍāṅgā and other places. There is an ancient temple of Śrī Jagannātha in old Saraḍāṅgā, which is also called Śavara-kṣetra. It is said that a Muslim king named Kālāpahāḍa became antagonistic towards the Hindus when his mother, a Hindu lady, was forcibly captured by Muslims and her Hindu parents abandoned her. She was left with no choice but to live with the Muslims. When he grew up Kālāpahāḍa came to know of this. He demolished thousands of temples and forcibly converted thousands of Hindus into Muslims. When he attacked Jagannātha Purī the deities of Jagannātha, Baladeva and Śubhadrā were brought to this place and worshipped by a devotee here.

According to the Purāṇas, once, in the course of Śaṅkarajī's (Śiva's) narration of the Supreme Lord's pastimes to Pārvatī, he began to describe Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's coming incarnation in Kali-yuga. Śrī Gaurāṅga is none other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself resplendent with the sentiment and lustre of Śrī Rādhā, performing the pastime of distributing *prema* to ordinary people. Such *prema* is rarely attained even by the demigods. Inspired by this description, Pārvatī-devī proceeded to perform severe austerities in this dense forest of Navadvīpa. Mahāprabhu became pleased by her austerities and appeared before her. Enchanted by His form, she expressed her desire to behold His pastimes when they would manifest in this world. Śrīman Mahāprabhu said, "Since you are My inseparable energy, you are always an associate in My pastimes. As My internal energy you are My dear Rādhikā, and as the external energy you are a manifestation of Rādhikā known as Durgā, or Pārvatī. As Yogamāyā you manifest My pastimes, and as Paurṇamāsī in





Śrī Baladeva, Subhadrā and Jagannātha at the present Jagannātha Temple in Sīmantadvīpa

Vraja you nourish them. Now in Navadvīpa you eternally reside as Prauḍhāmāyā along with Kṣetrapāla Śiva. You bewilder those who are indifferent to Me, and you help those who turn toward Me to become attracted to serving Me."

Hearing this, Pārvatī became overwhelmed with ecstatic love. She took Śrīman Mahāprabhu's foot-dust in her hands and placed it where her hair parts in the middle. Mahāprabhu then disappeared. The parting in the hair is called *sīmanta*, and because she placed Mahāprabhu's foot-dust there she is worshipped as Sīmantanī-devī. The place where this pastime occurred became known as Sīmantadvīpa.

Chand Kazi's samādhi

This place is situated in Sīmantadvīpa on the boundary of Antardvīpa. Nearby was Maulānā Sirajuddīna Chand Kazi's palace. Śacī-devī's father, Nīlāmbara Cakravartī, used to reside in this village. Chand Kazi was a high official in the kingdom of Emperor Hussein Shah, Bengal's chief ruler. At that time Chand



Chand Kazi's *samādhi*

Kazi was the administrator of Navadvīpa as well as its magistrate. Some considered him to be the spiritual master of the Emperor. He used to be a great opponent of Hindu religion and after breaking a *mṛdaṅga* during the devotee's *kīrtana* in Śrīvāsa-aṅgana he passed a law against the performance of *saṅkīrtana*. That same evening, in defiance of that law, Śrīman Mahāprabhu gathered hundreds of thousands of people, almost all carrying burning torches. Performing *kīrtana* with *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas* they went to Chand Kazi's residence. The terrified Chand Kazi hid, but somehow Mahāprabhu enticed him out, assuring him he had no need to fear. "According to village relationships you are My maternal uncle and I want your affection. Why are you hiding?"



Mahāprabhu and Chand Kazi

Chand Kazi replied, "After breaking the *mṛdaṅga*, I returned home. That night while I slept, the form of Nṛsiṁha suddenly mounted my chest and scratched it with His nails. Trembling in rage He said, 'Today I'm letting you go, but if in the future you ever again obstruct the *saṅkīrtana* movement, I will kill you. Always remember this.' I started from my sleep in horror. Look, even now You can see His nailmarks on my chest. I promise that from this day forth, I will never obstruct the *saṅkīrtana* movement; nor will anyone in my dynasty obstruct it. I will disown anyone who does so."

Śrīman Mahāprabhu then inquired from the Kazi, "Please explain why are you engaged in cow killing. The cow, who gives milk to both Hindus and Muslims, is the mother of everyone." The Kazi replied, "In our noble *Koran* there is no injunction to kill the cow. Those who do so are acting in opposition to the *Koran*." After this incident, Chand Kazi became a devotee, and when he disappeared from this world, his *samādhi* was built at this place. Even today Śrīman Mahāprabhu's Vaiṣṇava devotees reverentially circumambulate Chand Kazi's *samādhi*.

At his *samādhi* a 500-year-old *goloka-campaka* tree stands as witness to this incident. The tree continues to blossom even though the upper part of the tree is hollow.



Śrīdhara-aṅgana

Śrīdhara-aṅgana is situated in the north-east corner of Antardvīpa at the border of Simantadvīpa near Chand Kazi's *samādhi* in the south-eastern direction. Here, in the middle of a banana grove was the dilapidated house of the *niṣkiñcana* Śrīdhara, the best of devotees and most dear to Śrī Gaura and Nityānanda Prabhu. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes Śrīdhara was the cowherd boy Kusumāsava Sakhā.



The area of Śrīdhara-aṅgana

Nimāī Paṇḍita used to meet him daily on the bank of the Gaṅgā. On the footpath that ran alongside the Gaṅgā, Śrīdhara would sit selling banana-leaves, banana-flowers, soft banana-stalks, ripe bananas, green bananas, and various vegetables such as bottle-gourd (*laukī*) and eggplant, all of which he had grown in his garden. With half of the money he obtained from his sales, he would buy flowers and other articles to worship the



A quarrel between Nimāī Paṇḍita and Śrīdhara

Gaṅgā, and the other half he used for his maintenance. He thus performed *bhajana* day and night.

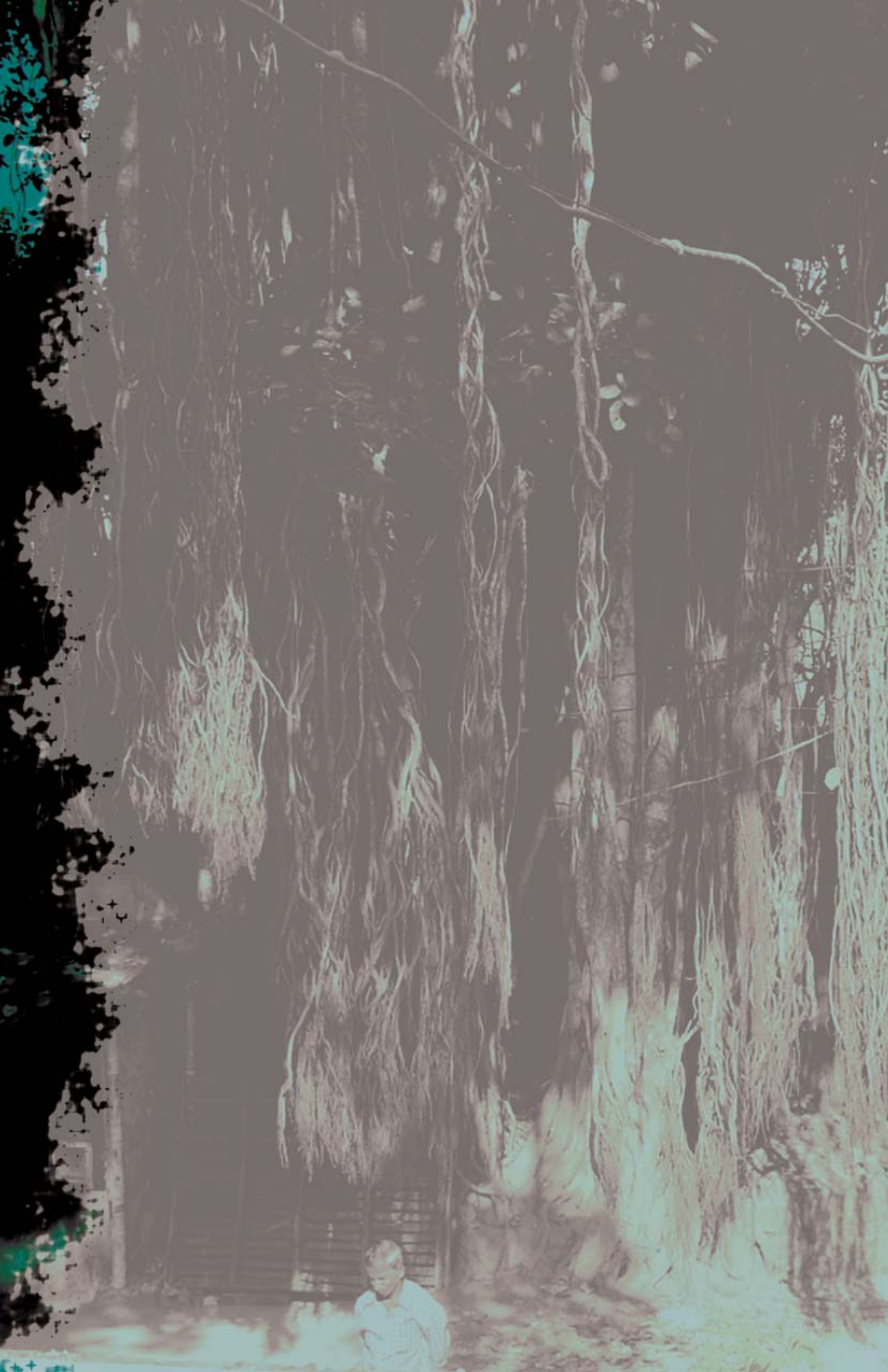
Nimāī particularly liked Śrīdhara's vegetables. Every day He 'took' a vegetable from him without paying – sometimes a *laukī*, sometimes a banana-flower and sometimes a ripe banana – and then a scuffle would take place between them. Śrīdhara would become angry, catch Nimāī's hand and say, "I'm a poor *brāhmaṇa*. What can I give in charity? Furthermore I'm worshipping the Gaṅgā." Mahāprabhu would answer, "And I'm Gaṅgā's husband. By serving Me, Gaṅgā will be satisfied." Śrīdhara replied, "You commit an offence by saying You are the husband of the Gaṅgā. You don't even fear Bhagavān Himself." Mahāprabhu laughed and said, "One day you will have to accept My words." Both the old man and the young boy derived immense delight from such quarrelling.

When, in Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, Śrīman Mahāprabhu manifested His *sāta-prahariyā-bhāva* ("the ecstasy of twenty-one hours")

Śrīdhara was called for and given *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Thus absorbed he cried, "Oh Kṛṣṇa, oh Kṛṣṇa!" and fainted.

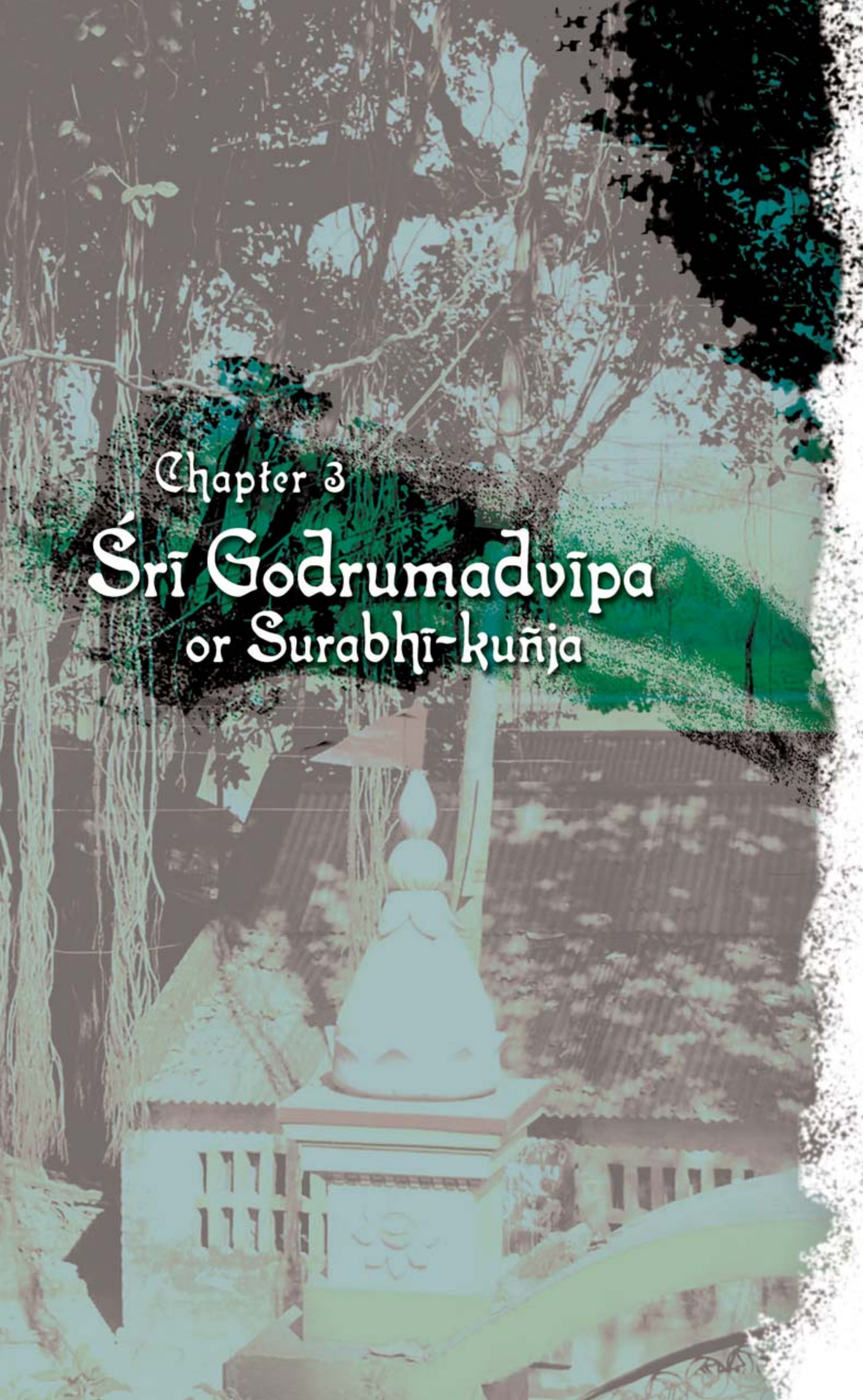
After defeating the Kazi, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Śrīdhara's house with a huge *saṅkīrtana* party. Mahāprabhu drank water to His satisfaction from Śrīdhara's broken iron pot, and greatly glorified him.

On the day that Mahāprabhu renounced His home He met Śrīdhara in the evening and received a *laukī* from him as a gift. He gave it to His mother and asked her to make *laklakī* [*laukī* cooked in milk with sugar]. When it was prepared and offered to their deity, Śrīman Mahāprabhu honoured that *mahā-prasāda* with great relish.



Chapter 3

Śrī Godrumadvīpa or Surabhī-kuñja



This island comprises the ancient places of Gādīgāchā, Bālīcara, Maheśagañja, Tiyorakhālī, Āmaghāṭā, Śyāma-nagara, Virijā, Devapallī, Harīśapura and Suvarṇa-vihāra. It extends from the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā and the southern bank of the Sarasvatī (Khaḍiyā River) to Devapallī. In the course of time local language usage has changed the name Godruma to Gādīgāchā.

Previously a massive banyan tree stood on a high part of the Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī's bank, where the Surabhī cow and the King of the demigods, Indra, worshipped Śrī Gaura. During Kṛṣṇa's pastimes Indra wanted to destroy Gokula because the residents of Vraja had stopped worshipping him. For seven days he sent torrents of rain upon Vraja, but Kṛṣṇa protected Gokula by lifting Śrī Govardhana. The pride of Indra was crushed and fear arose within him because of his offence. When he learnt from Grandfather Brahmā that Śrī Gauracandra would appear in



Surabhī-kuñja

the future, he took Mother Surabhī with him and performed austerities under a banyan tree at this lonely place in Navadvīpa, hoping to evoke His mercy.

A long time passed. Finally Śrī Gauracandra appeared before him saying, "I understand your heart. After some time I will appear in Śrī Navadvīpa and distribute the chanting of My holy name along with pure love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to the general people. At that time you will assist Me in My pastimes." When the Lord disappeared, Mother Surabhī made a hut under this banyan tree and became absorbed in worship of Śrī Gauracandra here. Since then this place has become known as Godruma. *Go* means "cow" (Surabhī) and *druma* means "tree".

Once during the time of cosmic devastation, Mṛkaṇḍa Ṛṣi's son, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, rested at this place. He had attained the age of seven *kalpas* (7 x 4,320,000,000 earth years). During the annihilation at the end of the seventh *kalpa*, the Earth was submerged in water, leaving not one place visible. Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi floated in the water and finally, by immense good fortune, he came to this place in Navadvīpa.

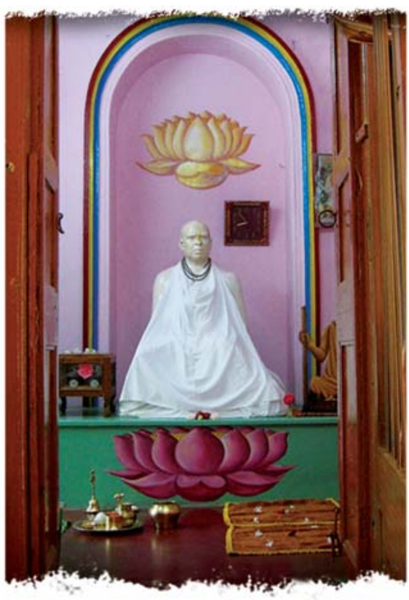
Seeing the exhausted sage unconscious from the effect of the dashing waves, merciful Mother Surabhī lifted him from the water of devastation and brought him to her hut. When he regained consciousness, he was amazed to see that Navadvīpa-dhāma was not under water. The sight of the beautiful forests and sub-forests filled with trees, plants, birds and animals of the thirty-two mile large *dhāma* greatly pleased him. Mother Surabhī gave him her nectarean milk to drink, which fully rejuvenated him. She then instructed him to remain at Godruma and worship Śrī Gauracandra.

"This *dhāma* is transcendental and beyond material nature," she said. "It cannot be seen with material eyes. Eight of the

islands of Navadvīpa are like the petals of a lotus, and Śrīdhāma Māyāpura is like the pericarp of that lotus. Here, in a concealed form, all the holy places and demigods worship Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. By worshipping Him one will attain service to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vraja with the sentiment of amorous love (*madhura-bhāva*). Although all perfections, the eight kinds of opulence and all kinds of liberation stand at the gate of this sacred place praying for service, the devotees of Śrī Gaura reject them from afar. By worshipping Śrī Gauracandra one becomes forever free from sins and miseries, as well as from all kinds of fructified and unfructified fruitive activities, desires for sense enjoyment, and from ignorance." Mārkaṇḍeya therefore remained here to perform *bhajana*.

Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja

Towards the eastern side of Godruma, on the bank of the Sarasvatī, lies Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, where Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura built a hut and performed his *bhajana*. In a corner of this grove is the *bhajana-kuṭī* of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, the crest-jewel among *avadhūtas* and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's intimate friend. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was later placed in *samādhi* here.



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *samādhi*



Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja

In present times, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is the main personality who re-inaugurated the propagation of pure devotion. He compiled approximately one hundred books on *bhakti* in various languages and established the transcendental glories of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. In the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community he is therefore known as the Seventh Gosvāmī. It is by the persistent endeavours of this great personality that the Śrī Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā (the Universal Assembly of Vaiṣṇavas) was established in Kolkata in the year 398 of the Caitanya era (A.D. 1884). He preached the message of Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāṇī*), the name of Mahāprabhu (*gaura-nāma*) and pure devotional service (*śuddha-bhakti*) very vigorously through the medium of a magazine called *Sajjana-toṣaṇī*. He also published many old, authoritative Vaiṣṇava literatures. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī

was his dear son and it was through him that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura preached pure devotion all over the world.

Once, in the middle of the night, while he was performing his *bhajana* in Godruma, he saw a transcendental light shining some distance from the other side of the river towards the north. The next day he saw the same light and he also saw Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda performing *mahā-saṅkīrtana* with Their associates at that same place. In order to understand this mystery, he crossed the Sarasvatī River and came to Śrīdhāma Māyāpura where he saw *tulasī* plants growing near a palm tree. Upon further inquiry from the local people, he learned that no crop grew there except *tulasī* – who grew of her own accord. In an attempt to verify that place as the birthplace of Śrī Gaurasundara, Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura studied old government maps and reports, as well as historic literature, specifically *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Bhakti-ratnākara*. He also heard from elderly, eminent, saintly personalities about it.



The river Sarasvatī and Śrīdhāma Māyāpura seen from Godruma



The Pañca-tattva deities established by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura at the Yogapiṭha Temple, Antardvīpa

Finally, he went there in the company of *nitya-siddha vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma* Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and other famous personalities of Bengal. When Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's arrived at that place, he danced with joy, thus indicating it to be the Yogapīṭha, the place of Śrī Gaura's appearance. Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura established the deities of Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā-Lakṣmīpriyā, the Pañca-tattva

and so forth there, and entrusted the management of the entire place to his son Śrī Vimalā Prasāda Sarasvatī. Later this Vimalā Prasāda became famous as Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura established *nāma-haṭṭa* and thus preached the chanting of the holy name and pure devotion in the villages. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja he was Śrī Kamalā Mañjarī. He was also an eternal associate of Śrī Gaurasundara.

Suvarṇa-vihāra

Suvarṇa-vihāra is situated near the Āmaghāṭā station on the Navadvīpa-ghāṭa railway line, which goes to Kṛṣṇa-nagara. In Satya-yuga King Suvarṇa Sena lived and ruled here for many years. His attachment to sense gratification and to his kingdom did not diminish, but lasted to his old age. Once, to his great fortune, the great sage Nārada appeared at his palace. Nārada saw that the king was completely absorbed in sense gratification, and this evoked his mercy. In a solitary place the sage proceeded to give the king instructions for his welfare: "My dear King, you are passing your life fruitlessly. You perceive what is useless to be valuable and what is of true value to be useless. Please consider the situation properly: it is material objects that have no value and no use. They entangle the living entity in the cycle of birth and death and repeatedly hurl him into it.

"Please deliberate on what I say. After death, what will become of your relationships with your father, son, wife, brothers, friends and subjects? These relationships will cease and your body will be burned. To remain attached to this material body is not very intelligent. If according to the result of one's fruitive actions, one goes to the heavenly planets and enjoys the happiness there, one must again return to this world, as such an attainment is not permanent.

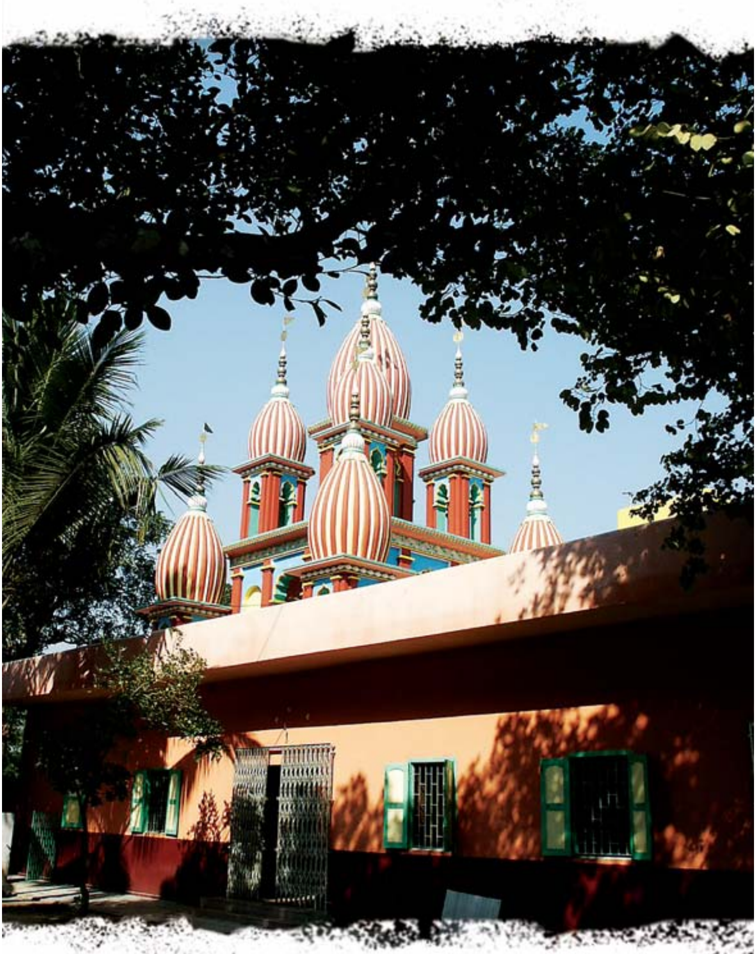
"Impersonal liberation completely destroys the living entity, so no material or transcendental happiness can be found there either. In such liberation the *jīva's* existence vanishes. Therefore fortunate living entities do not desire it.

"The *jīva* is Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant, but having forgotten the Supreme Lord, he wanders throughout various species of life always troubled by the three types of miseries. If by good fortune while wandering in this material world, he attains the association of pure devotees, then transcendental faith (*pāramārthika-śraddhā*) arises in his heart. When he takes shelter of a bona fide spiritual master, he starts his practice of *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. By taking unalloyed shelter of a spiritual master and performing *bhajana* in the association of devotees, his faith (*śraddhā*) gradually matures into *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, *āsakti*, *bhāva* and finally *kṛṣṇa-prema*. The only correct process to attain pure devotion is to perform the nine types of devotional service, such as hearing, chanting, remembering and praying. Only by this *sādhana-bhakti* can one attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

"O King, you are born in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma and thus you are very fortunate. In the forthcoming Kali-yuga, the source of all incarnations, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, will appear as Śrī Gaurāṅga accepting the sentiment and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He will distribute the holy name and love of God to the common man. Those people who live in Kṛṣṇa's abode and perform their *sādhana-bhajana* there while tolerating many difficulties, attain perfection after a long time. But for those who live in the land of Gaura and take shelter of Gaura's name, offences are easily removed. They quickly attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*." Speaking thus, Nārada Muni chanted "Gaurahari!" and danced in ecstatic love.

That night, after Nārada Ṛṣi left, the king dreamt of Śrī Gaurahari and His associates dancing and singing. When his

sleep broke, the aggrieved king began to cry. Then a voice from the sky said, "O King, do not be distraught. In My manifest pastimes you will become My associate, Buddhimanta Khān, and you will render Me many kinds of service." Śrī Buddhimanta Khān assisted Śrīman Mahāprabhu in various ways, such as assisting Him in His journey to Purī-dhāma.



Śrī Suvarṇa-vihāra Gauḍīya Maṭha established by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

At the present time, Śrī Suvarṇa-vihāra Gauḍīya Maṭha, established by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, is situated in a mango grove on the ruins of Suvarṇa Sena's palace.

Harihara-kṣetra

Harihara-kṣetra is also called Mahā-Vārāṇasī. It is situated on the bank of the Gaṇḍakī River on the eastern side of the river Alakānandā. Here in an ancient temple, Śrī Hari and Śrī Hara (Viṣṇu and Śiva) are manifest in one and the same deity. The best of the Vaiṣṇavas, Śrī Śambhu (Śiva), and *vaiṣṇavī-śakti* Śrī Gauri eternally reside here chanting the name of Gaura. Residence in this place is superior to residence in Kāśī and Kailāśa. When a living entity dies here Śambhu chants Śrī Gaura's name in his ear and thus delivers him from this material world.

Śrī Mahādeva, or Śrī Śambhu, is actually Sadā-Śiva. This means he is *viṣṇu-tattva*, a primary expansion of the Supreme Lord. There is no difference between Sadā-Śiva and Viṣṇu. Accepting a portion of the mode of ignorance, Sadā-Śiva destroys this material world and fulfils the desires of the *jīvas*. He bewilders those who are unfavourable to Kṛṣṇa, and he grants devotion to Kṛṣṇa and protects those who are favourable. He worships Kṛṣṇa in his abode of Kāśī or Kailāśa. As the foremost of Vaiṣṇavas he is very dear to Śrī Hari and is non-different from Him.

Persons like Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarṇa, Meghanāda, Kaṁsa, Jarāsandha and Bhaumāsura, are envious of Śrī Hari and only worship Śaṅkara. They are called demons and Śrī Hari kills them. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes how Puṇḍarīka Vāsudeva and his friend, the king of Kāśī, opposed Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa killed the coward Puṇḍarīka Vāsudeva and chopped off the king's



The ancient temple in Harihara-kṣetra



Śrī Harihara with consorts Lakṣmī and Parvatī

head, throwing it at the gate of Kāśī. At this, his son prepared to attack Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but before he could do so Kṛṣṇa burned the entire city of Kāśī to ashes with the heat coming from His Sudarśana *cakra*. Śaṅkara left Kāśī with his associates and took shelter of Harihara-kṣetra.

The real nature of Lord Śiva is very mysterious. When Śrī Rāmacandra established Rāmeśvara, a deity of Śiva, everyone present acknowledged Rāmeśvara to mean *rāmasya īśvaraḥ*, or "Śīva is the lord (*īśvara*) of Rāma." The demigods opposed this

and through the compound *rāmaśca asau īśvaraḥ* they derived another meaning: "Rāma and Śaṅkara are both the Lord (*īśvara*)." These explanations distressed Śaṅkara, who personally spoke from the *śiva-liṅga*: "Neither explanation is correct. Through the grammatical compound *rāmaḥ yasya īśvaraḥ sa rāmeśvaraḥ* the meaning of Rāmeśvara becomes: 'Rāmeśvara is he whose Lord is Rāma.'" Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is established as the sole Lord of all lords, and Śaṅkara as His precious servant.[1]

In the narration of Ūṣā's marriage in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* a fight is described between Bāṇāsura and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śaṅkara sided with Bāṇāsura, who was defeated by Kṛṣṇa. Śaṅkara prayed to Kṛṣṇa to spare Bāṇāsura's life, and as a result Kṛṣṇa cut off all but four of Bāṇāsura's thousand arms, and made him an associate of Śaṅkara.

Vaiṣṇavas acknowledge Lord Śaṅkara as dear to the Supreme Lord and the spiritual master of the Vaiṣṇavas, and therefore they respect and honour him. Śaṅkara is *kṣetrapāla*, the protector of all of Bhagavān's holy abodes. In Vṛndāvana, where he accepts the mood of a *gopī*, he is famous as Śrī Gopīśvara. He bestows *kṛṣṇa-prema* upon qualified living entities, and thus gives them entrance into Vṛndāvana. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also accepts Śaṅkara as the best of Vaiṣṇavas, *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ*. Even if the Lord gives him unpleasant instructions, Śaṅkara is forever attentive to carry them out. When the ocean of milk had been churned, Śaṅkara, understanding Viṣṇu's desire, drank the poison the churning had produced and thus protected the universe. Śaṅkara also understood the desire of his Lord and Master, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that he come as Śrī Śaṅkarācārya to propagate impersonalism, which is opposed to the principles of the Vedas. By doing this he obscured pure

devotion and knowledge of the essential reality of the Supreme Personality, subdued the atheistic Buddhists, and destroyed the impersonal *karma-kāṇḍa* [the division of the Vedas that deals with fruitive activities]. By always observing Bhagavān's desire, Śaṅkara serves the Lord's innermost desire.

Devapallī (Nṛsiṁhapallī)

Devapallī, situated in the south-eastern part of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, has been famous since Satya-yuga. Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva rested here after killing Hiraṇyakaśipu, who had been tyrannising the devotee Prahlāda. This place is situated on the ancient riverbed of Mandākinī, on whose bank various demigods such as Brahmā, Indradeva, Sūryadeva, Gaṇeśa and Viśvakarmā built their residences on different hillocks. Here they stay worshipping Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva. In course of time, the flow of Mandākinī changed; the demigods' dwellings also turned into hillocks and the temple vanished.





The deity of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva in Devapallī



While performing *saṅkīrtana* Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His associates came to this place, which is considered to be the border of Navadvīpa-dhāma. In the evening they returned to Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, passing through Harihara-kṣetra, Brāhmaṇa-puṣkariṇī, Suvarṇa-vihāra and other places. The forests and gardens here were replete with rivers, streams, mango groves, small villages, and various birds and animals like deer, blue-cows and cuckoos. Absorbed in ecstasy Śrī Gaura and Nityānanda Prabhu sang and danced as They returned to Māyāpura with Advaita Ācārya, Gadādhara, Mukunda, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and other associates. People from every village received them as they passed by and participated in their chanting and dancing.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu would remember the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa returning to the village from the forest where He was grazing the cows – the flute in full splendour seated on His lips; a yellow cloth decorating His bluish-black limbs like a permanent lightning flash shimmering against a new monsoon cloud; and a *vaijayantī-mālā*, a garland of five kinds of flowers, extending down to His feet. The cowherd boys sang Kanhaiyā's glories, while millions of mooing cows surrounded Him. Taking Kṛṣṇa to be a bluish-black cloud and the sound of His flute to be

thunder, the peacocks became intoxicated. They spread their tail-feathers and began to dance.

The cuckoos' singing of "*kuhu-kuhu*" sounded as if they were welcoming Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* – hiding in the groves on both sides of the path, on the roofs of high buildings and behind the latticed windows of the residential quarters – worshipped Śyāmasundara through their crooked side-long glances.

Suddenly an old lady said to her newly married daughter-in-law, "Stay in the house. If you go out, this black (*kṛṣṇa*) snake will bite you. You will not get free from the poison it injects for the rest of your life." The simple-hearted *gopī* responded, "Why don't you forbid your own daughter to go? And why are you yourself going? I shall certainly go."

Śrīman Mahāprabhu was thus absorbed in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā taking direct *darśana* of Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa. With great difficulty, Mahāprabhu's associates tried to bring Him back to consciousness, and when they eventually did, He burst into tears. At that time Gadādhara Paṇḍita sang this verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.21.5) in a sweet, melodic voice.

barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ vaijayantīṁ ca mālām
randhrān veṇor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-vṛndair
vṛndāraṇyaṁ sva-pada-ramaṇaṁ prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ

Śyāmasundara is entering the forest of Vṛndāvana accompanied by His cowherd boyfriends. In His turban there is a peacock feather; over His ears, a *karṇikāra* flower; on His body, a yellow cloth glitters like gold; and around His neck, extending down to His knees, is a heart-stealing garland strung with five kinds of fragrant forest flowers. He is dressed like an expert dancer on a stage, and the nectar of His lips flows through the

holes of His flute. Singing His glories, the cowherd boys follow behind Him. Already more charming than Vaikuṇṭha, Vṛndāvana-dhāma, marked with the impressions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet which are decorated with the conch, disc and other symbols, has become even more beautiful.

And Mukunda Ghoṣa recited this verse (*Padyāvali* 46):

phullendīvara-kāntim indu-vadanaṁ barhāvataṁsa-priyaṁ
śrī-vatsāṇkam udāra-kaustubha-dharaṁ pītāmbaraṁ sundaram
gopīnāṁ nayanotpalārcita-tanuṁ go-gopa-saṅghāvṛtaṁ
govindaṁ kala-veṇu-vādana-paraṁ divyāṅga-bhūṣaṁ bhaje

I worship Govinda, whose complexion is the colour of a blossoming blue lotus flower. His face is like the moon, and He is fond of wearing a peacock feather in His crown. His chest bears the mark of Śrīvatsa and is adorned with the Kaustubha gem. He wears beautiful yellow garments, and His handsome form is worshipped by the *gopīs'* sidelong glances. His companions are multitudes of cows and cowherd boys. He plays sweet melodies on the flute, and His body is decorated with glittering ornaments.

Hearing these verses everyone became immersed in ecstasy.

Nityānanda Prabhu and His *sakhās* blissfully accompanied Śrīman Mahāprabhu who then entered the mood of Kanhaiyā. They all arrived at the house of Śacī-mātā, who then performed *āratī* to the devotees. Taking Gaura and Nityānanda on her lap, she wiped the dust from Their bodies with the end of her *sari*.

Śrī Nṛsiṁha rested at this place after killing Hiraṇyakaśipu, the father of His great devotee Prahlāda. Hiraṇyakaśipu was opposed to the Supreme Lord and His devotees. He forbade his son Prahlāda to chant the name of the Lord, but Prahlāda Mahārāja never complied. Hiraṇyakaśipu devised many means

to kill his son. He threw him into fire, hurled him into the ocean, gave him poison and threw him into a pit of snakes. When not one of these plans was successful, he again sent Prahlāda to study with Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, the sons of Hiraṇyakaśipu's spiritual master, Śukrācārya.

One day, while his teachers were absent from the classroom, Prahlāda began to instruct his schoolmates, all of whom were the children of demons. "We do not know when death will come," he told them. "According to their *karma*, some people die in childhood, some in youth, some in adulthood and some in old age. Therefore, it is necessary to worship the Supreme Lord from childhood. Just as one suffers misery, despite making no endeavour to attain it, one will also experience happiness, which also comes of its own accord as a result of one's previous actions. Therefore, the sole and most beneficial duty of one who has acquired a human birth is to worship the Supreme Lord.

"He who spends this precious human life gathering enjoyment for the senses is just like an animal. He must leave behind whatever he has collected as a result of his activities, including his body. Such things cannot give happiness and peace to the living entity, who is the eternal servant of the Lord. We have fallen into this miserable condition because we have turned away from the Lord. Only by worshipping Bhagavān can the *jīva* remain eternally happy. The highest duties of the living entities are chanting the holy name, hearing narrations about the Lord and remembering these narrations." The words of Prahlāda Mahārāja had a powerful effect on the boys and they loudly chanted the name of Hari.

Hiraṇyakaśipu came to know that Prahlāda was spoiling the other children, inciting them to join him in chanting the holy name, and he called him to his palace. His eyes and face red

with anger he leaped at Prahlāda with club in hand shouting, "Now let's see who will protect you! Where is He?" Fearlessly, Prahlāda answered, "He is not only my protector, He is also yours; He is the protector of the entire universe. He is omnipresent; there is no place where He cannot be found. I see Him everywhere." Hiraṇyakaśipu bellowed, "Oh, you liar! Is He also in this pillar?" And he smashed it with his bare fist. A dreadful roar and loud peals of laughter resounded from the pillar and Hiraṇyakaśipu shuddered as the fearsome Nṛsiṁha Bhagavān, with the body of a human and the head of a lion emerged. He prepared himself to fight with Śrī Nṛsiṁha, but the Lord placed him across His thighs and slayed him. He did not kill him during the day or during the night, but at twilight; it was neither inside the house nor outside it, but in the doorway; it was not in any standard month, but in Puruṣottama, the leap month; it was not with any weapons or arms that He tore open his stomach, but with His nails.[2]

The demigods began offering glorifications to the Lord, who repeatedly requested Prahlāda to ask for a boon. Prahlāda, however, would not accept one. Finally, he said, "Let me suffer the miseries of all the living entities of the universe. Then, when they are free from all of their sins, please allow them to be engaged in Your service." The Supreme Lord became extremely pleased by this prayer of Prahlāda Mahārāja, who is the ideal devotee. Mere remembrance of him removes all worldly miseries and one attains devotion to the Lord.

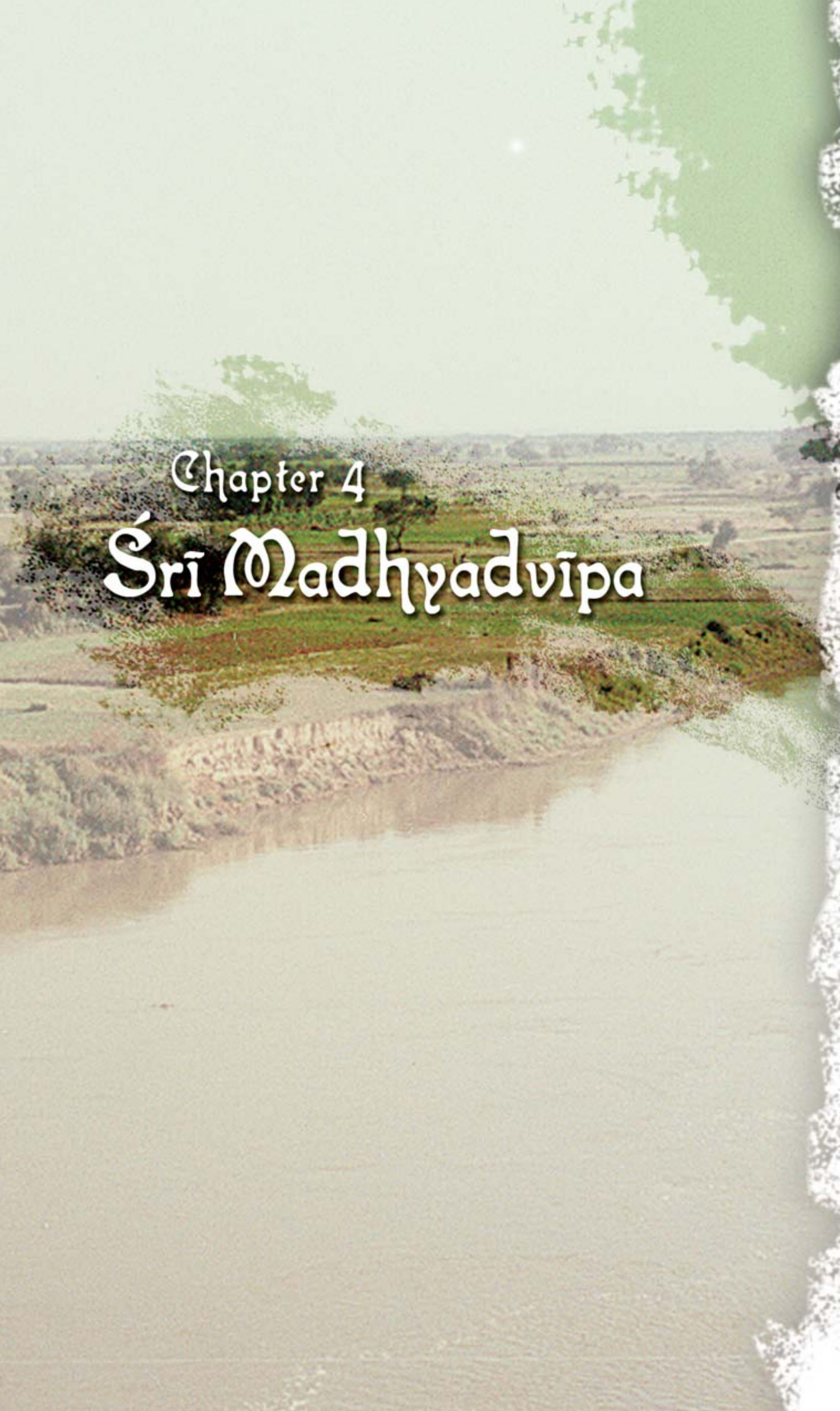
Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva is greatly honoured at Nṛsiṁhapallī. In Vraja people show honour to Girirāja-Govardhana with the hope that he will fulfil any desire or remove any misery, and in Gauḍa-maṇḍala they respect Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva for the same purpose. People come from afar to take His *darśana*.

[1] The name Rāmeśvara has numerous meanings. The ability to give the most esoteric meaning depends on the qualification of the speaker.

[2] Hiraṇyakaśipu had earlier received the benediction from Lord Brahmā that he would not die on the land or in the sky, so Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva placed him on His lap, which was neither land nor sky. He had also received the benediction that he would not die either during the day or night, so he was killed at dusk, which is the juncture between day and night, but is neither day nor night. Hiraṇyakaśipu had also received other benedictions from Lord Brahmā and to keep them all intact, Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva killed him accordingly.



Chapter 4
Śrī Madhyadvīpa



Madhyadvīpa is situated south-west of Godruma, and it encompasses Majīdāgrāma, Vāmana-pāḍā, Simūlagāchi, Brahma-nagara and other villages. With the gradual degeneration of the language, the name Madhyadvīpa became Majīdāgrāma. Places to visit here are Saptarṣi-bhajana-sthala (Saptarṣi-ṭila), Naimiṣāraṇya, Puṣkara-tīrtha, Uccahaṭṭa, Pañcaveṇī and Haṁsavāhana Śīva.

Saptarṣi-bhajana-sthala
(the place of worship of the seven sages)

In Satya-yuga, the seven great sages (*saptarṣis*) – namely Marīci, Atri, Aṅgīrā, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastha and Vaśiṣṭha – approached Grandsire Brahmā and talked with him about Śrī Gaurahari, who would appear in the coming Kali-yuga. They discussed His method of *bhajana*, and how He would distribute to everyone, even the dog-eaters, the *prema* that even the demigods rarely attain. When they requested Brahmā to tell them something about the nature of this *prema*, Brahmā became pleased and instructed the sages to go to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. There they should chant Śrī Gaurahari's names and remember His pastimes. He said that by this process, the *dhāma* itself would awaken *gaura-prema* in their hearts. Those who have love and affection for Navadvīpa-dhāma, where offences are not considered, easily attain residence in Vraja.

When they heard the glory of Śrī Navadvīpa these sages built their *bhajana-kuṭīs* at this place in Madhyadvīpa. Praying for Gaurasundara's mercy, they remained here, loudly chanting and glorifying Śrī Gaurasundara's name, form, qualities and pastimes. They relinquished eating, drinking, sleeping and other types of sense enjoyment. One day, at noon, while chanting the name of Gaura, the extraordinarily attractive Śrī Gaurasundara

appeared to them together with His associates. The sages glorified and completely surrendered to Him, who was resplendent with the sentiments and lustre of Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Gaurasundara ordered the sages to give up all desires fulfilled through *jñāna*, *karma*, *tapasyā* and *yoga*, and only desire to serve Kṛṣṇa, devoting themselves exclusively to chanting Kṛṣṇa's name. "After some time," He said, "I, along with all My associates, will manifest My pastimes in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, and you will be able to witness them."

After Śrī Gaurasundara disappeared from their vision, the seven sages remained here at Saptarṣi-bhajana-sthala and eagerly engaged in worshipping Śrī Gaura. During Śrīman Mahāprabhu's manifest pastimes, He and His associates would come here performing *kīrtana*.

Naimiṣāraṇya

The supremely sacred Gomatī River flows south of Saptarṣi-ṭilā. The groves bordering the Gomatī are called Naimiṣāraṇya. Here 88,000 sages heard narrations about Śrī Gaurasundara from the mouth of Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī. At that time, Pañcānana Mahādeva (Śiva) gave up his bull carrier (*vāhana*) and rode on a swan (*haṁsa*) to hear Śrī Gaura's pastimes accompanied by his associates.



The temple of Haṁsavāhana Śiva where the deity of Lord Śiva is riding on Lord Brahmā's swan carrier

Brāhmaṇa-puṣkara (Puṣkara-tīrtha)

The present name of Brāhmaṇa-puṣkara is Vāmana-pokharā or Vāmana-purā. In Satya-yuga, a *brāhmaṇa* named Jīvana dāsa came here while visiting all the holy places and took up residence here. His ardent desire to take bath in Puṣkara-tīrtha made him extremely restless. As he slept that night he heard a divine voice in his dream: "Remain here for some time chanting the holy name of the Lord and your desire will be fulfilled." He made a hut and performed *bhajana* here until the end of his life. In his very old age, Tīrtharāja Puṣkara mercifully appeared to him in the form of a beautiful pond and told him to take bath. Upon doing so the *brāhmaṇa* was blessed with a divine vision in which he directly saw the personification of Tīrtharāja Puṣkara. Puṣkara-rāja mercifully instructed him, "O *brāhmaṇa*, whatever benefit a person attains by taking one hundred baths in all the other holy places, he attains by residing in Navadvīpa-dhāma for just one night. Therefore I will also reside here eternally along with all the holy places of the Earth. In the upcoming Kali-yuga, Śrī Gaurahari will manifest in Navadvīpa-dhāma and distribute *kṛṣṇa-prema* through the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names. You will take birth at that time and have the good fortune of seeing His pastimes."

Uccahaṭṭa

Uccahaṭṭa, which is also called Hāṭa-ḍāṅgā-grāma, is Kurukṣetra within Brahmāvarta [a tract of land between the rivers Yamunā and Gaṅgā]. On one side flows the Sarasvatī River and on the other side, the Dṛṣadvatī. Taking all His associates with Him, Śrīman Mahāprabhu passed through Brāhmaṇa-puṣkara and came here while performing *kīrtana* with up to fourteen *mṛdaṅgas*. All the demigods would come and loudly chant Gaura's name in unison and narrate His pastimes. Therefore this

place is called Uccahaṭṭa. *Ucca* means "in a loud voice" and *haṭṭa* means "gathering". It is also known as Hāṭa-ḍāṅgā, which means "the place where the demigods assemble". If one always resides in Navadvīpa at Uccahaṭṭa, which is non-different from Kurukṣetra, and performs *bhajana* here, one will quickly attain Śrī Gaurasundara's mercy.



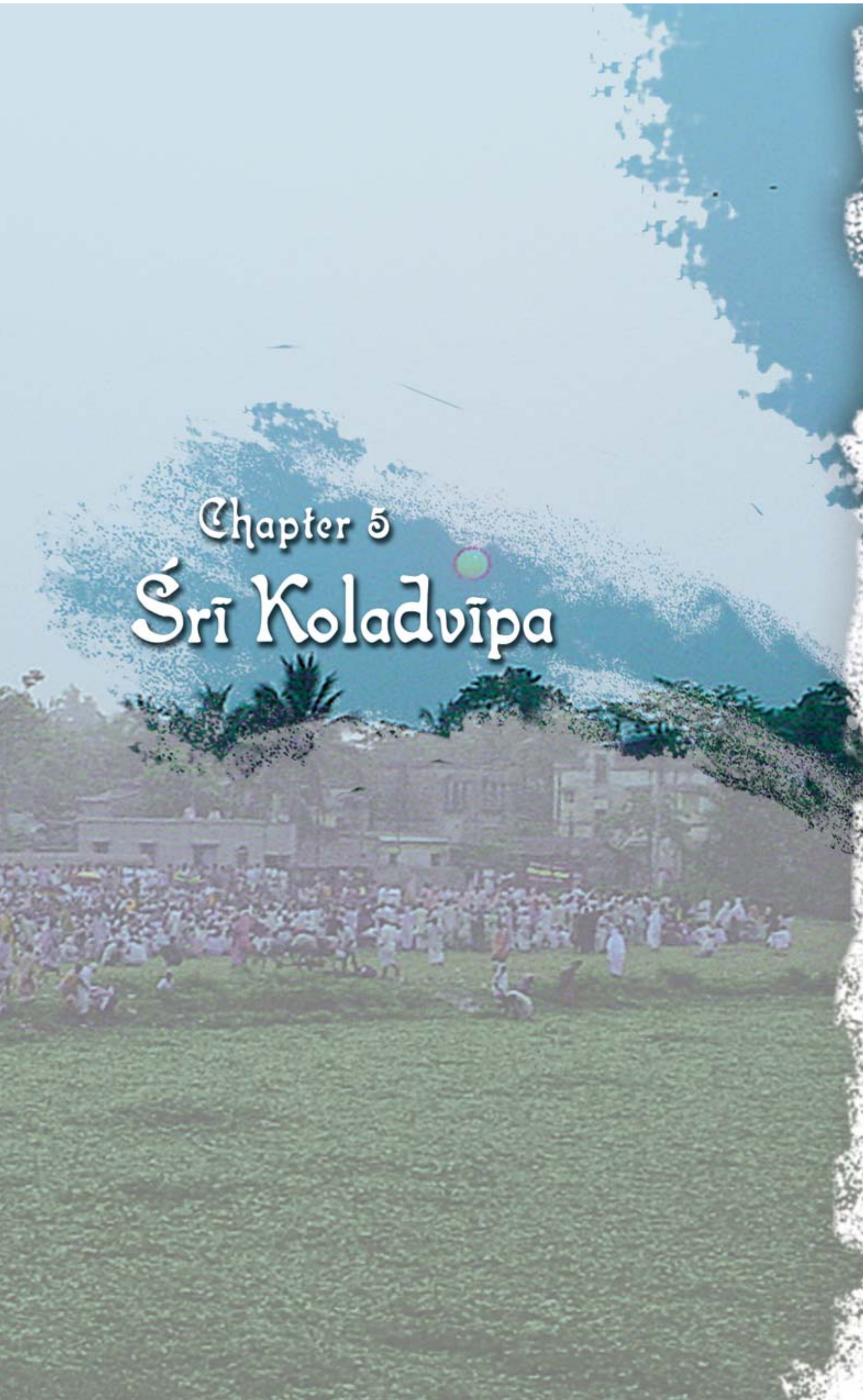
Pañcaveṇī

Pañcaveṇī is situated near Uccahaṭṭa. It is the confluence of the Bhagavatī-Gaṅgā as well as the Mandākinī, Alakānandā and Sarasvatī (which is hidden). On the western side, the Gaṅgā meets with Bhogavatī and Mānasa-gaṅgā. This place is the glorious Mahā-Prayāga. Grandsire Brahmā performed millions of sacrifices on the Gaṅgā's two banks. If a living entity dies here – in the water, on the land or in the sky – he effortlessly attains Śrī Goloka-dhāma.

All rivers converge here to perform service to Śrī Gaura. This is the conclusion of Śrī Vedavyāsa and other omniscient sages. There is no other holy place in the fourteen planetary systems equal to this Pañcaveṇī. Śrīman Mahāprabhu's sacred pastimes easily manifest in the hearts of those who reverentially remember Him while taking bath or performing *ācamana* here. Loving devotion for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet then manifests in their hearts.



Chapter 5
Śrī Koladvīpa



Koladvīpa includes such places as Gaṅgā-prasāda, Samudragaḍha, Campaka-haṭṭa, Gadakhalīkācara, Kolāmāda, Pāramedīyā, Gādakhalīra, Tegharīpāḍā and Tegharīkola. It also includes the present city of Navadvīpa, which is called Aparādha-bhañjana-pāṭa, or Kuliyā. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his informative article on Kuliyā-dhāma, published in the magazine *Sajjana-toṣaṇī*, that on this Earth, Śrī Kuliyā-pahāḍa within Navadvīpa is unparalleled.

On the western bank of the Gaṅgā, near the confluence of the Pañcaveṇī (which is situated on both the eastern and western banks) is the raised land called Śrī Kuliyā-pahāḍa. Śrī Koladeva, which is a name for Varāhadeva (the boar incarnation), appeared in Koladvīpa.

Once, in Satya-yuga, a *brāhmaṇa* named Vāsudeva lived in Koladvīpa where he worshipped Varāhadeva. Lord Varāha was so pleased with the *brāhmaṇa's* worship that He appeared before him, first as Varāhadeva (Koladeva) and then in His form of Nṛsiṁha. Upon seeing this form of Nṛsiṁha, who protected the devotee Prahlāda by killing Hiraṇyakaśipu, the fortunate *brāhmaṇa* became restless with love and began to glorify the Lord. Pleased, the Lord again assumed His mountain-like form as Koladeva and spoke the following words. "This Navadvīpa-dhāma, which is Gupta Vṛndāvana, or the hidden Vṛndāvana, is very dear to Me. No other *dhāma* in the three worlds can compare to it and all other *dhāmas* on the Earth are eternally situated in their full splendour within it. Residence here easily grants the result of residing in all other holy places. In Kali-yuga Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, having accepted Śrīmatī Rādhikā's mood and complexion, will appear as Śrī Gaurāṅga in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. While performing various pastimes with His associates,

He will propagate the chanting of the holy name and in this way distribute love of God to the common people. You will take birth at that time and receive the fortune of beholding those pastimes. For now, however, keep this secret." With these words, Śrī Koladeva disappeared and Śrī Vāsudeva Vipra continued his worship of the Lord.



Śrī Koladeva, or Varāhadeva, the presiding deity of Śrī Koladvīpa



Present-day Kuliyā

Koladvīpa is non-different from Śrī Govardhana. Bahulāvana is in Koladvīpa's northern part and the place of *rāsa-līlā* of Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana is in the southern part.

Koladvīpa is also called Aparādha-bhañjana Kuliyā, or "Kuliyā, the place where offences are destroyed". After taking *sannyāsa*, Śrīman Mahāprabhu went to Śrī Purī-dhāma. He travelled for some time in South India and then returned to Purī. Later He travelled again, this time to take *darśana* of Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana. Thousands of people accompanied Him as He passed through places such as Pānīhāṭī, Kumārahaṭṭa and Kāñcanapallī, until He finally arrived at Vidyā-vācaspati's house in Vidyānagara. The crowds were so great that for seven days Mahāprabhu stayed in Mādhava dāsa's house in Kuliyā. While He was here, He delivered Gopāla Cāpāla, a resident of Kuliyā, who was an offender to both the Vaiṣṇavas and the holy name, and Devānanda Paṇḍita, who also offended the Vaiṣṇavas.

Gopāla Cakravartī was a government tax collector who worked under Śrī Hiraṇya and Govardhana Majūmdāra, the well-known residents of Saptagrāma. He was highly scholarly and very beautiful. One day the royal priest, Balarāma Paṇḍita, went with Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura to the royal court of Śrī Hiraṇya and Govardhana. Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura proceeded to glorify the holy name saying, "What to speak of uttering one pure name, the utterance of a mere semblance of the holy name – spoken to indicate something else (*saṅketa*), jokingly (*parihāsa*), disrespectfully (*avahelā*), derisively (*stobha-avajñā*) or inattentively (*upekṣā*) – can easily bestow liberation. Pure chanting of the holy name awards *kṛṣṇa-prema* by which one attains Vaikuṇṭha or above that, Śrī Goloka-dhāma." Haridāsa Ṭhākura's statements greatly angered Gopāla, who contemptuously insulted him: "Liberation is attained only by *jñāna*; it can never be attained by *harināma*. If one can attain liberation by chanting the holy name, then let my nose rot and fall off, otherwise, if Haridāsa's statement is wrong, let his nose rot and fall off." A tumult broke out in the assembly. Balarāma Paṇḍita said, "You have offended the exalted Vaiṣṇava Haridāsa Ṭhākura. There will never be any auspiciousness for you. You have guaranteed your own destruction due to your terrible offence to a Vaiṣṇava."

After this incident Govardhana dāsa dismissed Gopāla Cakravartī from his service. And although the *mahā-bhāgavata* Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the personification of forgiveness and tolerance, did not accept Gopāla's offence, Gopāla became afflicted by leprosy three days after the incident. His beautiful *campaka*-flower-like nose, his fingers and his toes rotted away. After many days Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Kuliyā-grāma and Gopāla Cakravartī went to see Him. Weeping, he surrendered to

the supremely merciful Mahāprabhu and begged forgiveness for his *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu forgave this *nāma-aparādhī brāhmaṇa* and instructed him to continuously chant the holy name. Gopāla Cakravartī did so and his leprosy soon disappeared leaving him beautiful as before. Now, he was Bhagavān's devotee, highly dedicated to the holy name, and a servant of the Vaiṣṇavas.

Another resident of Navadvīpa named Gopāla Cāpāla was a depraved *brāhmaṇa*. He became so envious of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita that he could not tolerate the *saṅkīrtana* at Śrīvāsa's house and tried to disturb him in different ways. At night he placed at Śrīvāsa's door many items used in the worship of the goddess Durgā, such as a wine pot and vermilion, to show that Śrīvāsa was only externally posing as a Vaiṣṇava. Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita had them removed and purified the place by smearing it with cow dung. Due to this great offence Gopāla Cāpāla soon became afflicted with leprosy. When, after accepting *sannyāsa*, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Kuliyā, Gopāla Cāpāla came to Him and falling at His feet, began to weep. Mahāprabhu told him to beg forgiveness from Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. He fell weeping at Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's feet and by the mercy of Mahāprabhu, his health returned.

At that time in Navadvīpa, Devānanda Paṇḍita was considered a great teacher of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and he instructed many students in his home in Kuliyā-nagara on the Gaṅgā's western bank. Once, the *mahā-bhāgavata* Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita passed by Devānanda Paṇḍita's house and heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* being recited. He went in and sat down to listen. As Devānanda Paṇḍita described Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita was unable to remain calm. He wept loudly and rolled on the ground. Devānanda Paṇḍita's students, who were devoid of *bhāva-*

bhakti, could not understand Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's *aṣṭa-sāttvika bhāvas*. Considering him a disturbance to their studies, they threw him out of the house. Devānanda Paṇḍita remained silent, doing nothing to stop them. When news of this incident came to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu He angrily said, "Devānanda does not understand a single letter of the *Bhāgavatam*, which is Śrī Kṛṣṇa personified and completely transcendental, so what can he teach! *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* can not even remain near him. He is an offender of both Vaiṣṇavas and the *Bhāgavatam*. I will tear up his false *Bhāgavatam* and throw it away."

Some time later, Devānanda Paṇḍita met Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, one of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates. Vidyānidhi mercifully gave him lucid instructions on philosophical knowledge about the devotees, *Bhāgavatam* and the Supreme Lord. He revealed to Devānanda Paṇḍita many confidential truths about Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. Remembering his previous behaviour Devānanda Paṇḍita became filled with remorse. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to Kuliyā after accepting *sannyāsa*, Devānanda Paṇḍita came before Him and in great humility, repeatedly begged forgiveness for his offence. Śrīman Mahāprabhu told him to beg pardon from Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita directly. Devānanda approached Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, an incarnation of Nāradajī, the personification of mercy. Śrīvāsa forgave all his offences and requested Mahāprabhu to show Devānanda Paṇḍita mercy. This He did, and thus made him qualified to attain love of God.

When the teacher Nimāī Paṇḍita was living in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, the prominent professors and students there opposed Him and ridiculed His devotional mood. For the welfare of these ignorant people bereft of *bhakti*, Nimāī Paṇḍita left Navadvīpa and took *sannyāsa*. Now, having understood His

glory, the teachers and students repented. When Nimāī Paṇḍita returned as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Kuliyā-nagara (after accepting *sannyāsa*), they all came to Mādhava dāsa's house to see him. Weeping they begged forgiveness at His feet, and the supremely merciful Mahāprabhu pardoned them. From that time, they all became devotees.

Because these pastimes took place here, Kuliyā-grāma is known as Aparādha-bhañjana-pāṭa, "the place where offences are destroyed".

Prauḍhāmāyā

Antardvīpa, south of Māyāpura, is the place of Vṛddha-Śiva and Prauḍhāmāyā, the protectors of the *dhāma*. They reside here eternally, bewildering those opposed to the Lord and engaging those who are favourably disposed towards Him in Śrī Gaura's service. Although they reside in Antardvīpa eternally, when the larger part of Māyāpura was lost in the Gaṅgā's flow, Prauḍhāmāyā was worshipped by the devotees in Kuliyā-pahāḍapura. Today people call this place "Pauḍhā Mā Talā".

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa took birth from Mother Yaśodā's womb, this same Yogamāyā also appeared. Yogamāyā is one of the Supreme Lord's *parā-śaktis*, or superior internal potencies, and she serves Him in various forms. In Nanda-bhavana or in Vraja she, as Yogamāyā, bewilders Mother Yaśodā into feeling that Kṛṣṇa is her son. Overpowered by a parental mood, Yaśodā binds Kṛṣṇa to the mortar, chastises Him and nurtures Him. All of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are accomplished by Yogamāyā. And to bewilder and punish Kaṁsa and other demons, she manifests as Mahāmāyā in Mathurā.

The various forms of Mahāmāyā, such as Durgā, Kālī, Bhadrā, Vindhyavāsinī, Kāmākhyā and Caṇḍī, bewilder materialistic



Prauḍhāmāyā at Pauḍhā Mā Talā





(above)
Mahāmāyā's temple near the temple of Prauḍhāmāyā

(left)
The deity of Mahāmāyā known as Mā Bhavatārinī

people by bestowing upon them wealth, opulence, sons, family and so forth. And as Yogamāyā Paurṇamāsī, she bestows transcendental power (*cit-śakti*) upon the living entities and grants them the eligibility to serve the youthful Divine Couple, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Yogamāyā places a covering over the Lord's abodes so that those opposed to Him cannot enter. And with the net of her Mahāmāyā she keeps fruitive workers, dry mental speculators and others away, depriving them of *darśana* of the *dhāma*.



(above)
The temple of Vṛddha-Śiva
at Pauḍhā Mā Talā



(right)
The *śiva-liṅga* worshipped
in the temple

Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's bhajana-kuṭī and samādhi

Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja used to reside at Sūrya-kuṇḍa in Vraja-maṇḍala where he performed his *bhajana*, but at the end of his life he moved to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. It was his habit to loudly chant the *mahā-mantra*. He was recognised as the most prominent scholar of his time. He was also acknowledged as being most expert in relishing transcendental mellows (*rasika*) and the most perfected Vaiṣṇava in Gauḍa-maṇḍala, Vraja-maṇḍala and Kṣetra-maṇḍala. He is therefore known as *vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma*, the topmost Vaiṣṇava. At Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's request this great personality determined Śrīdhāma Māyāpura to be the birthplace of Śrī Gaura. On his order a grand temple was constructed in Māyāpura at the birthplace of Śrī Gaura, where the deities of Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā-Lakṣmīpriyā and Pañca-tattva are presently worshipped.



The *bakula* tree under which Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja sat to do *bhajana*

In the Bengali year 1302 (A.D. 1895), two years after Māyāpura-dhāma was located, Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja entered his unmanifest pastimes. He had appeared in a village in the Ṭaṅgāila portion of the Mayamana-siṅha district in East Bengal (Bangladesh) and remained in this material world

for approximately 144 years. It is said that in an act of great mercy he infused his entire strength in *bhajana* and his knowledge of the scriptures, culminating in *prema-bhakti*, into the heart of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.



Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's *samādhi*

Once the disciples of Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja complained to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura: "We gave up our home to learn about *bhajana* from Bābājī Mahārāja, but instead he is instructing us to serve Bhagavān by growing flowers and vegetables. He is not educating us in meditation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's daily eight-fold pastimes. Please request him to train us in *bhajana*."

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura responded, "Growing *tulasī*, flowers, fruits and vegetables for the service of the deity will purify the living entities who are afflicted by offences and desires in the heart opposed to *bhakti* (*anarthas*); otherwise it is not possible for them to chant the pure, transcendental name. If unqualified persons meditate on these confidential pastimes their *anarthas* will substantially increase, and gradually they will be unable to perform *bhajana*. We will benefit by performing our *sādhana* according to Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja's instructions."

Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja used to save whatever donations people gave him. One day he ordered his disciples to buy *rasagullas* and other sweets, offer them to the deity and give the *prasāda* to the cows and dogs of the *dhāma*. His disciples, however, wanted to use the money to invite the *bābājīs* of that place for a grand festival. Bābājī Mahārāja forbade them. "It is more beneficial to feed the cows and dogs of the *dhāma* than to feed so-called Vaiṣṇavas who outwardly dress as saintly personalities wearing *tilaka* and beads, but who secretly engage in illicit activities. By feeding the animals of the *dhāma* one will enter pure *bhakti*." All the *rasagullas* were then given to the cows and dogs.

In his extreme old age Bābājī Mahārāja's eyelids drooped so low that they obstructed his vision. There was a dog where he lived that had six or seven puppies. When his disciples brought

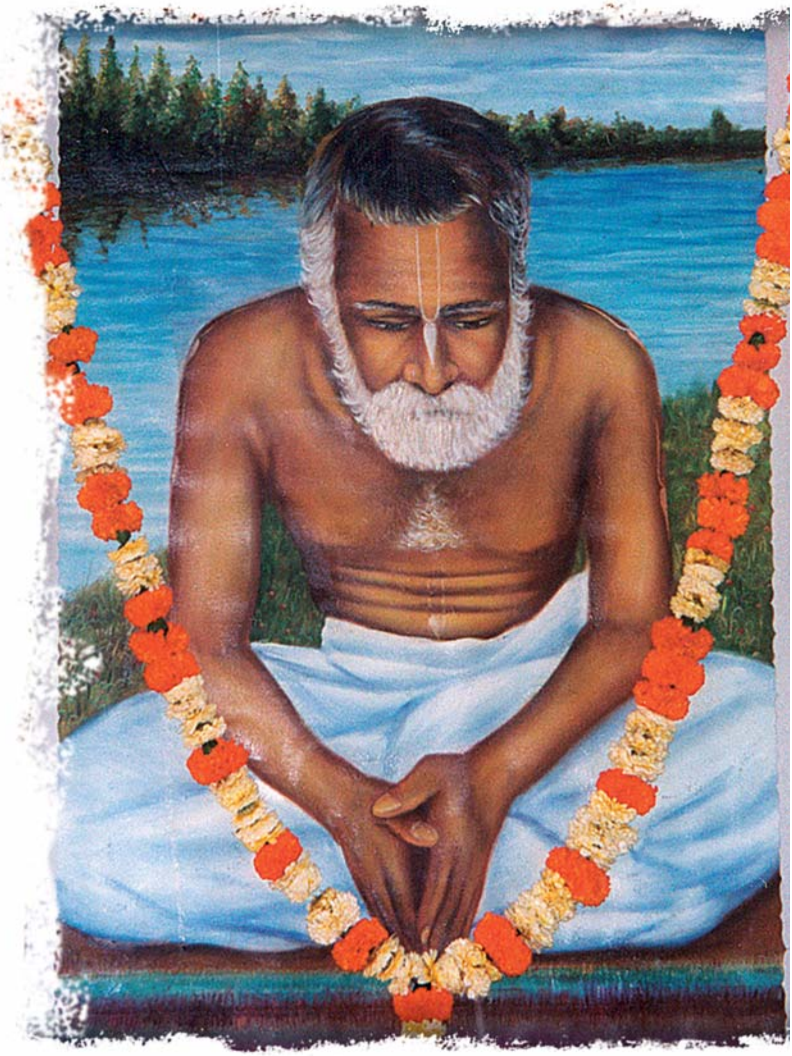
him *mahā-prasāda* he would wait for the puppies to come to him and count them with his fingers. Then he let them eat from his plate. Only after they had eaten would he himself honour *prasāda*. If his disciples hid the puppies from him he, displeased, would not honour *prasāda*. He would indignantly say, "You people do not understand that these are the puppies of the *dhāma*; they are not ordinary. I will not take anything until they come here and honour *prasāda* with me." Such was Bābājī Mahārāja's firm faith in the *dhāma*.



His disciples used to carry him in a basket on their heads – sometimes to Māyāpura, sometimes to Godruma-kuñja and sometimes to other places. Upon arriving at Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, he sang and danced, jumping high into the air.

Kuliyā-dharmaśālā
(and Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja)

Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, the crest-jewel of *avadhūtas* and *paramahaṁsas*, performed *bhajana* from time to time here. He would also perform his *bhajana* at Kṛṣṇa's various pastime-places in Vraja, such as Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Sūrya-kuṇḍa, Nandagrāma and Varsānā. His *bhajana* was characterised by severe renunciation, so extreme, in fact, that when he felt hungry he sometimes ate



Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

the mud from Rādhā-kuṇḍa or the Yamunā. In a mood of separation from the Divine Couple, he would cry out, "O Rādhā! O Kṛṣṇa!" and wander from forest to forest loudly singing songs

such as "*kothāya go premamayī rādhe rādhe, kothāya go vraja-vilāsinī rādhe rādhe.*" In his later life he came to Śrī Navadvīpa to get the mercy of this *dhāma*.

Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja had taken a vow not to accept any disciples, but Śrī Vimalā Prasāda Sarasvatī vowed to fast until he received initiation from him. This, combined with the request of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, resulted in Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja giving initiation into Vaiṣṇavism to the boy Sarasvatī, who became famous in the Vaiṣṇava world as *oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

Bābājī Mahārāja regarded honour and prestige harmful to *bhajana*. He therefore carefully avoided it, considering it to be like the stool of a pig. People would disturb him to receive blessings for their material desires, such as wealth, followers, sons and family. Once, to avoid such materialistic people, Bābājī Mahārāja went to live in the abandoned latrine in a government *dharmaśālā* in Kuliyā. When the District Magistrate came to know of this he went to meet him with the Police Superintendent. Bābājī had locked the latrine door from inside, and even though they waited for a long time, repeatedly requesting him to open the door, he would not come out to meet with them. They offered to construct a hut for him in a good location, but Bābājī Mahārāja did not consent to the idea. According to Bābājī Mahārāja, the association of materialistic people is more disgusting than the stench of excrement, and is an obstacle for *bhakti*. He later entered his unmanifest pastimes in this same *dharmaśālā*.

Our worshipful spiritual master, Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja (at that time known as Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmacārī) came to Śrīdhāma Māyāpura to take *darśana*

of Bābājī Mahārāja. Initially, Bābājī spoke faintly from inside the latrine: "I'm very sick and cannot open the door." When, however, Vinoda-bihārī Brahmacārī said, "I'm a servant who has taken shelter of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura," Bābājī immediately opened the door. He affectionately put his hand on Vinoda-bihārī's head and said, "Perform your *sādhana-bhajana* fearlessly. I personally accept all your hardships." Whenever our spiritual master remembered the mercy Śrī Bābājī Mahārāja bestowed upon him, he became overwhelmed with ecstatic emotion.

Once a man approached Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja and repeatedly requested him to bestow his mercy upon him. Bābājī Mahārāja immediately took off his *ḍora* and *kaupīna* [the undergarments of a renunciant], and told him, "Here, take my mercy." Fearing that he would have to give up material life the man quickly fled.

Another incident involved a young man who referred to himself as Bābājī's disciple and who lived near his *āśrama*. After some days he returned to his home, married and came back to Bābājī Mahārāja with his wife. He offered obeisances to Bābājī and begged for his auspicious blessings, saying, "Bābājī Mahārāja, I have collected a maidservant (*kṛṣṇa-dāsī*) for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's service. Please give us your blessings."

Bābājī gravely said, "It is a matter of great pleasure that you have established a new house for Kṛṣṇa and collected a *kṛṣṇa-dāsī*. But, be cautious! Never entertain the thought of personally enjoying her. Never accept any service from her, always think of her as worshipful and always serve her. A *kṛṣṇa-dāsī* is most respectable and worshipful for the entire universe." When that young man heard this, he quickly left with his wife.

Once, with great happiness, a so-called *bābājī* gave the following auspicious news to Bābājī Mahārāja: "I have

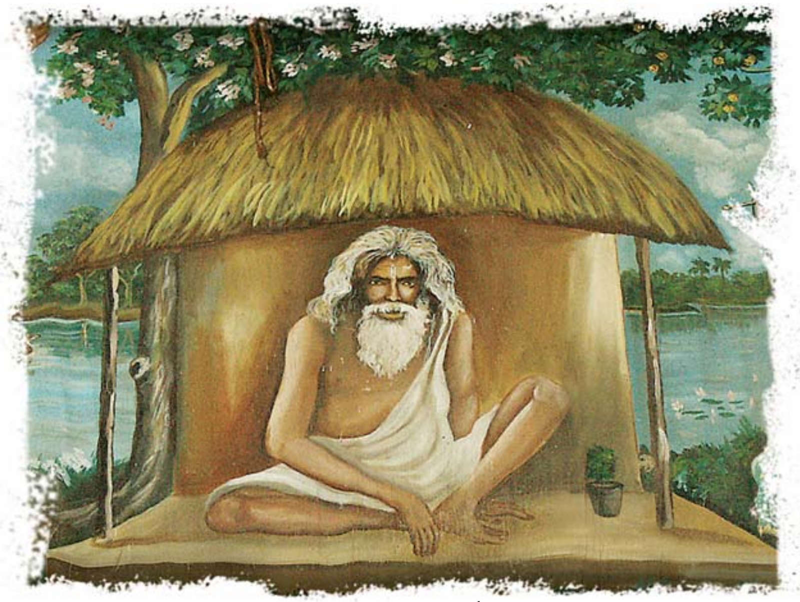
purchased a beautiful place in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. I will build a hut there and perform *bhajana*." Hearing this Bābājī Mahārāja answered, "It is very amazing that you have purchased land in Navadvīpa-dhāma where every particle of dust is transcendental and millions of times more valuable than a *cintāmaṇi*, a wish-fulfilling gem. The entire wealth of the universe cannot compare with the value of just one dust particle of this abode, and you have bought a piece of this land? This is beyond my comprehension." Ashamed, the man fell at Bābājī's feet.

Previously the *samādhi* of this great personality was situated in Kuliyā-grāma (Navadvīpa Town) on the Gaṅgā's western bank, but when the river flooded, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura re-established it next to Rādhā-kuṇḍa close to Śrī Candraśekhara-bhavana.

Although, from a worldly point of view, Bābājī Mahārāja was blind and uneducated, prominent speakers of the *Bhāgavatam* who were his contemporaries would come to hear his confidential and ambrosial explanations of verses from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Śrīla Vaṁśī dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

The highly exalted Śrīla Vaṁśī dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, a contemporary of Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, was completely dedicated to *bhajana*. On the bank of the Gaṅgā in Kuliyā's Nūtana-caḍhā, he built a hut where he performed his *bhajana*. He worshipped his Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda deities with *bhāva-sevā*, serving Them with great love and affection – sometimes reproaching Them, sometimes fighting and quarrelling with Them, and sometimes crying in separation from Them. Even great philosophers were confounded by his fathomless attachment to his deities, and the sentiments hidden



Śrīla Vaṁśī dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

within his heart. Once, when he was picking flowers from a *kanera* tree next to his *bhajana-kuṭī*, a young boy forbade him to do so, and an argument ensued. The boy pushed Bābājī Mahārāja, who fell and hurt his feet. Bābājī returned to his hut, threatening Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda saying, "Why did You send me to pick flowers? And why did this boy push me? I will not serve You." He became sulky, but Bābājī was unable to stay in this mood for long and soon he again became absorbed in his service. He used to become so blissfully absorbed in *nāma-bhajana* that he would forget to follow Ekādaśī, and on other occasions he would observe Ekādaśī for three or four days, even fasting from water. Sometimes he greatly glorified Nityānanda Prabhu and would call Mahāprabhu mischievous. Sometimes to avoid materialistic people and materialistic so-called Vaiṣṇavas, he would throw impure items, like fish bones and fins, around

his hut so that ordinary men would think him low-class and stay away from him.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī acknowledged him as a *siddha-mahāpuruṣa* and greatly honoured him, and Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's disciples would visit him. It was very difficult to understand Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja's manner of speaking and his moods, because he was always roaming in the internal kingdom of *bhakti*.

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha



The northern part of Śrī Koladvīpa is both Śrī Govardhana and Bahulāvana; and in the southern part, where the Yamunā flows on the western side, is Śrī Vṛndāvana's place of the *rāsa-līlā*. Vaṁśī-vaṭa and the place of the *rāsa* are in the midst of the forests and gardens on Yamunā's bank.

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha is situated in the middle of Koladvīpa. In 1940, after *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupada entered *aprakaṭa-līlā*, one of his intimate associates, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, established Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti in a rented building. He did this to fulfil his spiritual master's innermost desire. He later purchased an extensive piece of land on which

he established a *maṭha* with a beautiful temple. The following deities preside in the three chambers of the temple: (1) Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, (2) Śrī Gaurāṅga and Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, and (3) Śrī Koladeva, or Varāhadeva, the presiding deity of Śrī Koladvīpa.



Śrī Gaurāṅga and Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī

The temple's nine towers each represent one limb of *navadhā-bhakti*, the nine types of devotional service: hearing, chanting, remembering, serving the Lord's lotus feet, worshipping, offering prayers, engaging as a servant, serving as a friend and completely surrendering oneself.

The *maṭha* is divided into the following nine parts (*khaṇḍas*):

(1) Paramārtha-khaṇḍa – the printing press where devotional literature and magazines are produced.

(2) Kīrtana-khaṇḍa – the place where *saṅkīrtana* and lectures on *Bhāgavatam* and other scriptures take place.

(3) Upāsya-khaṇḍa – the temple where the deities of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī and Śrī Koladeva are worshipped.

(4) Sevaka-khaṇḍa – the place where the residents of the *maṭha* live.

(5) Bhoga-khaṇḍa – the storehouse and kitchen.

(6) Govardhana-khaṇḍa – the cow shed.

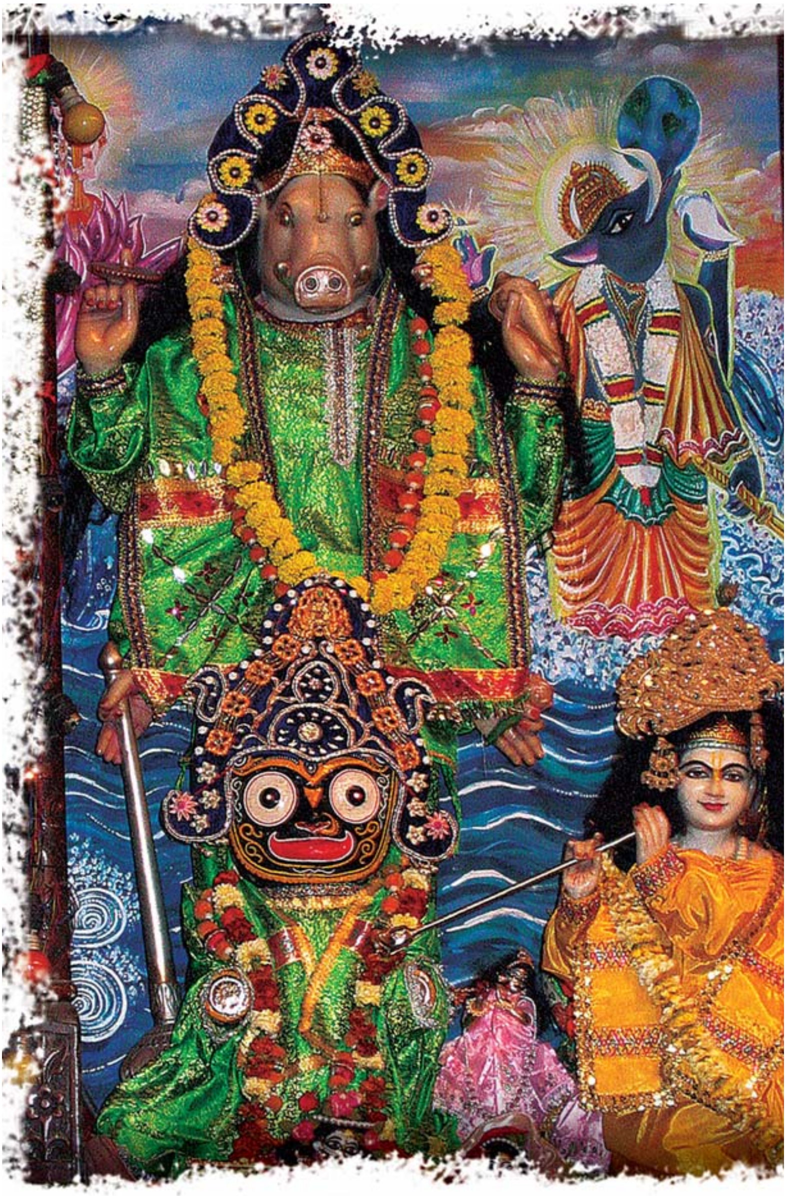
(7) Vaiṣṇava-granthāgāra-khaṇḍa – the library.

(8) Udyāna-khaṇḍa – the garden.

(9) Jñāna-khaṇḍa – the bathrooms and latrines.

These sections are divided on the basis of activities favourable to *bhakti*, which are to be accepted and those unfavourable, which are to be avoided. *Jñāna* and *karma* which are devoid of *bhakti* are always to be rejected just as one rejects stool. For this reason the bathrooms and latrines of the *maṭha* are called Jñāna-khaṇḍa.

It was Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī's long-held desire that a deity of Śrī Koladeva be established on the Gaṅgā's western bank in the old Kuliyā-nagara. To fulfill this desire, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja has manifested the service of Śrī Koladeva at this place.



The deity of Śrī Koladeva at Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha



Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, appeared in East Bengal (present day Bangladesh) in the village of Vānārīpāḍā in the Variśāla district. He took birth in the well-established Guhaṭhākurtā dynasty. He was the second son of the great devotee Śrī Śaradacandra Guha and the highly devotional Bhuvana-mohinī-devī. He had a very beautiful golden complexion, therefore he was called Janārdana, which comes from the word *jyotsanā* (moonlight) or *jonā* (which is derived from *jyotsanā*). His actual name was Śrī Vinoda-bihārī. When Vinoda was eight years old his father died. Śrī Bhuvana-mohinī-devī was a very skilled and learned woman from a family of landowners, and she brought up her children to be the same. From childhood Vinoda-bihārī was fearless, intelligent, virtuous, benevolent, strong, wise and, above all, deeply religious. Seeing his managerial competence and desire to render service to society and humanity at large, everyone honoured him. At age twelve, when Vinoda was in eighth grade, he began to take responsibility for management of the family land, showing competence and knowledge of law that is rarely seen in one so young. He passed the entrance examination and received admission to Uttarapāḍā College. One year later he commenced his studies at Daulatapura College. The teachers there lauded

his recitation of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* and other religious scriptures.

In 1915 he went with his paternal aunt, Śrīmatī Sarojavāsinī-devī to meet Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, and received *harināma* initiation from him. Then in 1919 on Phālgunī-pūrṇimā [Gaura-pūrṇimā, the appearance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu] he received Vaiṣṇava initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda. From that time on he was manager of the press in Kṛṣṇa-nagara, which printed the daily magazine *Nadīyā*, and he also contributed many articles to this magazine. In 1929 Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was so pleased with one of his philosophical lectures that Prabhupāda presented him with his complete collection of philosophical scriptures.

On 21st March, 1932, on the occasion of Gaura-pūrṇimā, Śrīla Prabhupāda gave him the title "Kṛtiratna" – "he who performs the crest-jewel of all activities" – being pleased with the responsibility with which he rendered service. Thereafter, Vinoda-bihārī preached pure devotion in Jagannātha Purī, Kaṭaka, Bāleśvara, Allahabad, Kānpura, Assam and other places. One of his works, *Māyāvāda kī Jīvanī* (*Vaiṣṇava-vijaya*), had a powerful effect on the Vaiṣṇava community. During his manifest pastimes, Śrīla Prabhupāda often tried to award Śrī Vinoda-bihārī *sannyāsa*, but for different reasons, was never able to do so. After his disappearance, Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared to him in three separate dreams and ordered him to enter the renounced order. Therefore in 1941 in Kaṭavā, where Śrīman Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa*, Śrī Vinoda-bihārī accepted the renounced order from Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and received the *sannyāsa* name Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He preached pure *bhakti* in Rāma-ghāṭa, Naihāṭī,

Kāṅcaḍāpāḍā, Chuṅchurā, Candana-nagara, Vaidyavāṭī, Śrī Rāmapura, Kolkata and other places on both sides of the Gaṅgā. Prominent scholars were impressed by his discourses on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He established Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha in Chuṅchurā upon the request of the local residents.

In 1940, on Akṣaya-tṛtīyā in the month of Vaiśākha (April–May), he founded Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti in a rented house on Bospāḍā Lane in Kolkata. He established the Samiti's headquarters, Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, in the present city of Kuliyā in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. From here he re-inaugurated the performance of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* and the celebration of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance. He published the monthly magazines *Gauḍīya Patrikā* in Bengali and *Bhāgavata Patrikā* in Hindi, and simultaneously he preached in villages in the districts of Medinīpura, Caubīsa-paraganā, Huglī and Vardhamāna. He established Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Catuṣpāṭhī. On 13th September, 1954, he founded Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā, and on Annakūṭa Mahotsava 1956, he installed the deities in this *maṭha*. In the same way he also established Śrī Goloka-gañja Gauḍīya Mathạ in Assam and Vāsudeva Gauḍīya Maṭha in Vāsugāon. He established a *maṭha* in Pichaladā, where Śrīman Mahāprabhu's footprints are, and a preaching-centre in Rāṇḍīyā-hāṭa (Koraṇṭa) near Bhadraka in Orissa.

Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja was a highly influential *ācārya*, with exemplary faith in his spiritual master (*guru-niṣṭhā*). He was an exceptionally gifted writer, a forceful speaker and was conversant with law. He was also an expert manager, wise and a fearless preacher of the truth. According to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's innermost desire he preached the message of pure *bhakti* all over India within a

very short time. On the night of *Śarada-pūrṇimā* in October 1968, he manifested his *aprakaṭa-līlā* and entered into *mahā-rāsa*. His *samādhi* also lies here.



Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja's *samādhi*

Śrī Caitanya Sārasvata Gauḍīya Maṭha

Tridaṇḍi-svāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, one of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's most prominent disciples, performed his *bhajana* and founded this *maṭha* here. As the best of scholars, he was expert in the philosophical conclusions of *bhakti*, and his discourses reflected this. This brilliant *ācārya* was also an extraordinary poet who composed several unparalleled hymns and prayers about Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, and the *dhāma*. Our spiritual master received *sannyāsa* from him. His *samādhi* is located here.

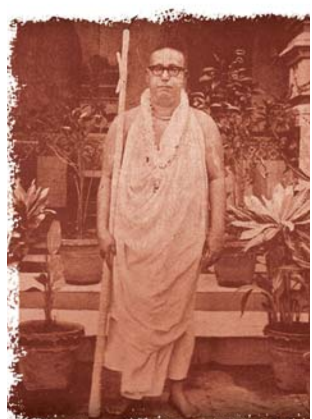


Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja and his *samādhi* temple at Śrī Caitanya Sārasvata Gauḍīya Maṭha



Śrī Sārasvata Gauḍīya Āsana and Mission

This *maṭha* was established by *parivrājakācārya* Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Mahārāja and Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Mahārāja, two of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples. Both were erudite, notable authors and influential speakers. They re-published *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Brahma-sūtra*, *Sindhu-Bindu-Kiraṇa* and some of the Upaniṣads, and established preaching-centres in Kolkata and Purī-dhāma.



Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Mahārāja

Samudragaḍha

This place is situated in the south-western part of Koladvīpa, and is understood to be within Bahulāvana in Vraja. It is also considered non-different from Dvārikāpurī and Gaṅgā-sāgara.

In Dvāpara-yuga King Samudra Sena, a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, ruled this area. At the time of the Rājasūya sacrifice, the powerful Pāṇḍava, Bhīmasena, who had defeated the kings of east India, came here with his army to conquer Bengal. Mahārāja Samudra Sena had an ardent desire to take Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *darśana*, and he knew that this is possible only by the mercy of His devotees. He thought, "If in battle I can somehow defeat Bhīmasena, he will have no other solution than to call out to Kṛṣṇa to protect him. In this way my worshipful Lord Kṛṣṇa will appear and I will be able to take *darśana* of Him." With high spirited zeal and full force he met Bhīma in battle, and by the Lord's desire, Bhīma actually faced defeat. When, in great distress Bhīma cried out to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the protector of the Pāṇḍavas, Kṛṣṇa immediately appeared on the battlefield, but only King Samudra Sena was able to have His *darśana*. The Supreme Lord remained unseen to Bhīmasena and to both armies. Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Samudra Sena about His coming advent as Śrī Gaurāṅga and instructed him to worship Śrī Gaura through *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. On Samudra Sena's request, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested His form of Gaurāṅga, resplendent with the lustre and sentiments of Śrī Rādhā. Upon receiving this *darśana*, the King became deeply content. He offered abundant gifts to Bhīma and established an alliance with him. Bhīmasena, also satisfied, departed with the happiness of victory.

This place is also non-different from Kumudavana in Vraja. During the late afternoon, Śrī Kṛṣṇa roams here performing

playful pastimes with the cowherd girls. King Samudra Sena also had *darśana* of these pastimes.

Famous Samudragaḍha is situated south of Navadvīpa on the western border. The ocean is not very far from here. Being eager to see the Lord's pastimes, Mahāprabhu's devotee, the ocean, came here along the Gaṅgā. Now the ocean eternally resides here taking *darśana* of Navadvīpa-dhāma and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes. It requested Mahāprabhu: "Please reside for some time on my shores, and bestow upon me the fortune of having *darśana* of Your wonderful pastimes there." To fulfill this desire Śrī Mahāprabhu, after taking *sannyāsa*, manifested His astonishing pastimes in Śrī Purī-dhāma on the ocean's shore.

Campaka-haṭṭa

Śrī Koladvīpa's south-western part, Campaka-haṭṭa, was named after the large garden of *campaka* flowers that used to be here.



Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara Gauḍīya Maṭha



Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara

Its present name is Cāṁpā-hāṭī and it is situated in the Vardhamāna district. In Satya-yuga an elderly *brāhmaṇa* resided here and worshipped Śrī Rādhā-Govinda with these *campaka* flowers. Pleased with his service, Śrī Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa appeared before him as the beautiful Śrī Gaura, whose complexion is resplendent like a *campaka* flower, and said, "In Kali-yuga I will manifest the form you now see and distribute the chanting of the holy name and love of Kṛṣṇa to the living entities. At that time you will also take birth and witness My most munificent pastimes." In Mahāprabhu's pastimes that *brāhmaṇa* was Dvija Vāṇīnātha, the younger brother of Śrī Gadādhara, who is the personified potency of Śrī Gaura. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes Vāṇīnātha was Kāmalekhā Sakhī. The deities of Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara that Vāṇīnātha worshipped are now being served here in Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara Gauḍīya Maṭha, which was established by *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda.

This is Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī's residence and place of *bhajana*. Jayadeva Gosvāmī was a contemporary of King Ballāla Sena, who greatly honoured him. Jayadeva's *bhajana-kuṭī* was on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank some distance from

Ballāla Sena's royal palace, but when an obstacle arose in his *bhajana*, he left there with his wife Padmāvatī and came to this solitary and charming garden. Once, as he was composing the verses of *Gīta-govinda*, a pastime in which Śrīmatī Rādhikā entered Her sulky mood (*māna*) appeared in his heart. Kṛṣṇa's repeated attempts to remove Her *māna* all failed. Then the mood entered Śrī Jayadeva's heart in which he understood that to pacify Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa put His head at Her lotus feet. This filled Śrī Jayadeva with fear and he could not bring himself to write it. He thought, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa is everyone's worshipful Supreme Lord and He possesses all potencies. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is His potency and maidservant. How is it possible for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to put His head at Rādhikā's lotus feet? That would transgress the principles of religion." His hand trembled and lost grip of his pen. He could write no more, so he went to take bath in the Gaṅgā. Meanwhile, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the topmost relisher of transcendental mellows, assumed the form of Śrī Jayadeva and went to his house. He asked Padmāvatī to bring Him the manuscript and personally completed the verse *smara-garala-khaṇḍanaṁ* ("the deadly poison of amorous love") that Jayadeva had begun to write, by adding *mama śirasi maṇḍanaṁ dehi pada-pallavam udāram* ("is counteracted by decorating My head with Your flower-like feet").

smara-garala-khaṇḍanaṁ
mama śirasi maṇḍanam
dehi pada-pallavam udāram

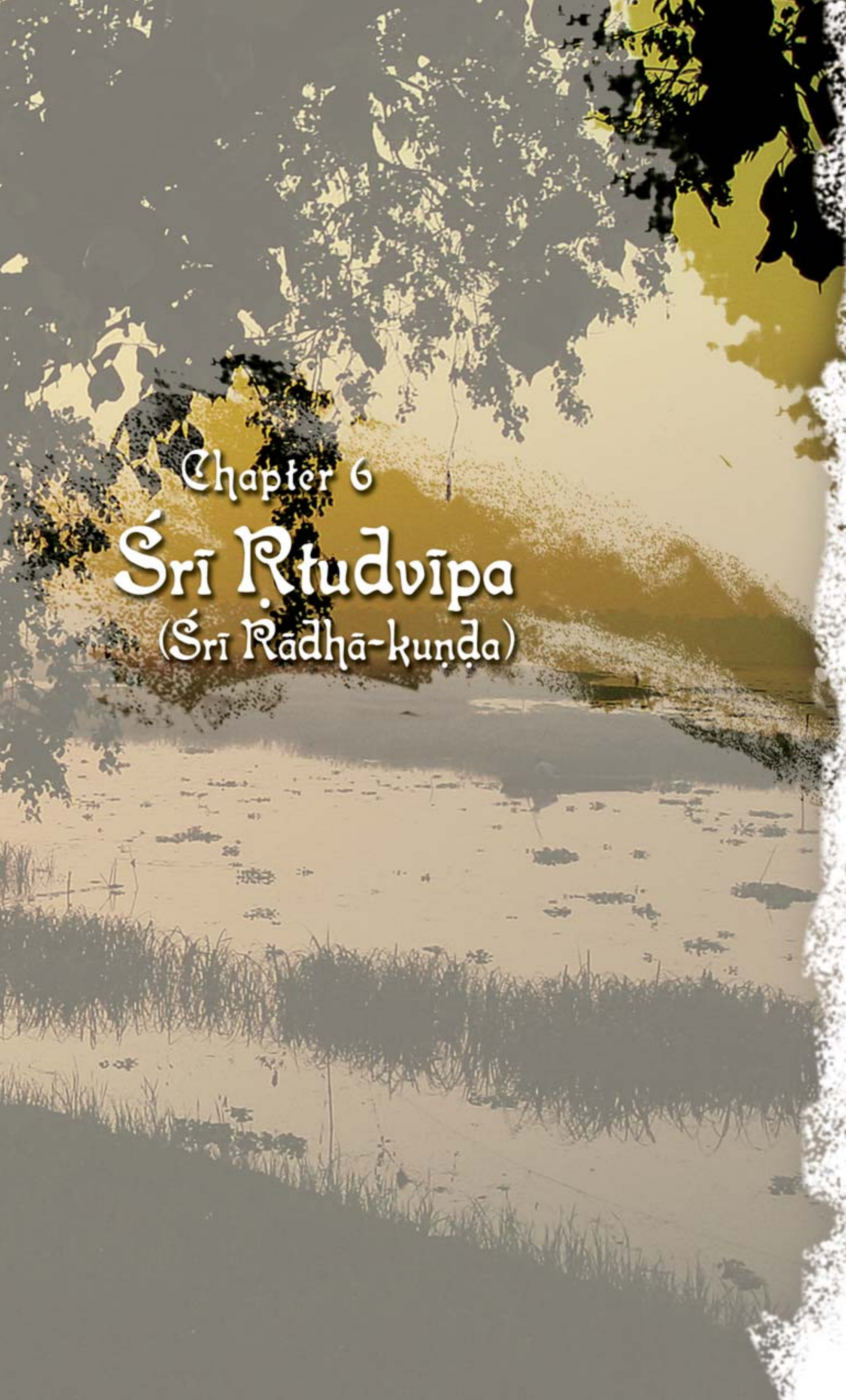
The beautiful flower blossoms of Your feet counteract the deadly poison of amorous love, and they extinguish the terrifying fire of the pain of that love, which rages within My heart. Therefore, please be kind and allow Your feet to decorate My head.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa left the house and a short time later, Jayadeva returned. Surprised, his wife asked, "How were you able to come back so quickly? Just a short while ago you returned, wrote something in your book, and again went out to take bath." Jayadeva Gosvāmī asked for his manuscript and upon opening it saw that his unfinished verse was now complete. Filled with wonder and weeping, he told his wife, "O Devī, you are blessed. You had *darśana* of Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa, who personally came here and completed the verse I feared to write. Kṛṣṇa is brought under control by *prema*, not by devotion based on rules and regulations."

After some time, Jayadeva Gosvāmī and his wife moved to Jagannātha Purī. *Gīta-govinda* is so beautifully sweet that even Jagannāthadeva Himself is eager to hear it. Once in a garden, a *deva-dāsī* [a dancing girl in the Jagannātha Temple] was singing the verses of *Gīta-govinda*, and Jagannāthajī came out of the temple and swiftly ran towards that garden. As He ran, thorny bushes tore His cloth and scratched His body. When he had heard all the verses He returned to the temple and took His place on the altar. When the *pujārī* opened the door he was astonished to see Śrī Jagannātha's condition. The head *pujārī* and the king were informed and everyone was filled with concern. The next night Śrī Jagannātha appeared to the head *pujārī* in a dream and revealed to him the secret that He heard verses being sung from *Gīta-govinda*, and in His haste to go to the source of the sound, His cloth was torn. When Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara recited *Gīta-govinda* verses to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, He became immersed in ecstasy.

Śrī Jayadeva received *darśana* of his beloved Lord in His form as Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.





Chapter 6

Śrī Ṛtudvīpa

(Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa)

Charming Ṛtudvīpa is situated north of Campaka-haṭṭa and south of Śrī Jahnudvīpa. The present name of Ṛtudvīpa (the hidden Rādhā-kuṇḍa) is Rātupura.

All six seasons are present in Ṛtudvīpa, which is full of flower gardens and lush, leafy bowers. On the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in particular are dense mango groves inhabited by singing cuckoos.

When Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu came here with Jīva Gosvāmī, He became absorbed in the mood of Baladeva Prabhu in His Vraja pastimes. He loudly cried, "Quickly bring Me My bugle! The calves have strayed ahead! Bhaiyā Kanhaiyā is still at home sleeping and is not here yet. O Subala! Śrīdāma! Where are you? How can I take care of the calves Myself? Brother Kanhaiyā, where are You?"

The devotees present caught Nityānanda and tried to calm Him. "Prabhu, Your brother Kanhaiyā came as Gauracandra. After taking *sannyāsa* He went to Jagannātha Purī where He now lives. His absence from Navadvīpa has left the entire town empty and desolate, but He is unmoved by our affection and love, and has reduced us to paupers."

Hearing this, Nityānanda Prabhu loudly wept and fell to the ground in a faint. He revived after some time, and said, "Bhaiyā Kanhaiyā, why did You become a *sannyāsī* and leave us all? Unable to live without You, I will jump into the Yamunā and give up My life!" And again He fell unconscious. The devotees loudly chanted Gaura's name, and after almost one and a half hours when He regained consciousness, He addressed the devotees saying, "This place is the hidden Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa. Surrounding the *kuṇḍas*, where Kṛṣṇa's midday pastimes (*madhyāhna-līlā*) take place, are the enchanting groves of the *sakhīs*." In the afternoon Śrīman Mahāprabhu and



His associates would come here performing *saṅkīrtana* and distributing *kṛṣṇa-prema* to everyone.

In the kingdom of *bhajana* Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa is supreme. Above Devī-dhāma [this material universe], across the Virajā and above both Brahmaloka and Śivaloka is Śrī Vaikuṇṭha-dhāma. In Vaikuṇṭha, above Sāketa and other *dhāmas*, is Śrī Kṛṣṇaloka, and in Śrī Kṛṣṇaloka, above Dvārakā, is Śrī Mathurā-dhāma. Within Mathurā, Śrī Gokula-Vṛndāvana is topmost, and in Vṛndāvana, Govardhana is the most superior place. In this Govardhana, Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Śyāma-kuṇḍa are supreme and the most confidential places of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's *līlā-vilāsa* (particularly Their midday pastimes).



Vidyānagara

Vidyānagara is situated within Ṛtudvīpa on Navadvīpa's western border. It is here that the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, Smṛtis and the sixty-four kinds of knowledge originated, and it is the main centre of their study and instruction. Lord Brahmā, the grand-father of the universe, taught the sages and the demigods at this place. These sages, who had realised the intrinsic nature of *mantras*, manifested the various Upaniṣads. Manu, Vaśiṣṭha, Parāśara, Yājñavalkya and others manifested the Smṛtis and taught them to the sages. Vālmīki Ṛṣi, by Śrī Nārada's mercy, compiled the original *Rāmāyaṇa* here and taught it to Bharadvāja and other disciples. At this place Dhanvantari received education in Ayurveda, Viśvāmitra in Dhanurveda, and Śaunaka and other sages in the Vedas and Purāṇas. Kapila Ṛṣi manifested *sāṅkhya* philosophy here; Gautama – *nyāya*, Kaṇabhūka – *vaiśeṣika*, and Pātañjali – *yoga*. Jaiminī manifested

mīmāṁsā here; Vedavyāsa – *vedānta-darśana*, *Mahābhārata*, the Purāṇas and so forth; and Devarṣi Nārada manifested *Pañcarātra-darśana*. Each instructed their specific areas of knowledge to their respective followers. In particular Śrī Vedavyāsa manifested the spotless Purāṇa, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which represents the essence of all knowledge, the meaning of *gāyatrī*, the essence of *Mahābhārata* and the truth established in the Upaniṣads. For the Vaiṣṇavas, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is as dear as life.

The omniscient Bṛhaspati, the *guru* of the demigods, came to know from Grandfather Brahmā that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself would appear as Śrī Gaurāṅga in the coming Kali-yuga and that through *saṅkīrtana* He would distribute *kṛṣṇa-prema* to the common person. Before Śrīman Mahāprabhu's manifest pastimes, Bṛhaspati took birth in Vidyānagara as Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. His father's name was Śrī Maheśa Viśārada and his younger brother was Śrī Vidyā-vācaspati.

Then, just before the appearance of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya went to Śrī Jagannātha Purī, where he became the royal scholar of Mahārāja Pratāparudra's court. Amongst contemporary *advaitavādī* scholars he was considered the most knowledgeable. Eminent, learned renunciants from the *advaitavādī* school came to study *Śaṅkara-bhāṣya*, a commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra* (or *Brahma-sūtra*), from him.

After accepting *sannyāsa* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Śrī Purī-dhāma where, upon taking *darśana* of Śrī Jagannātha, He became so overwhelmed with ecstasy that He fell to the ground unconscious. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, who was present there, was astonished to see the eight symptoms of transcendental ecstasy (*aṣṭa-sāttvika bhāvas*) on Mahāprabhu's



The temple at Vidyānagara

body. Understanding Him to be an extraordinarily great personality, he brought Him to his residence. Soon after, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and the other devotees went to his house, and from them Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya became very pleased to learn Mahāprabhu's identity as the son of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra, his father's dear friend. He affectionately insisted on teaching Him the *Śaṅkara-bhāṣya*, Śaṅkarācārya's commentary on the Vedānta, for seven days. The young *sannyāsī*, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, however, refuted all the logic Sārvabhauma presented in an attempt to establish that the true purport of the Vedānta is that the Absolute Truth is devoid of attributes (*nirviśeṣa-brahma*). Instead, Mahāprabhu established the Absolute Truth as being endowed with all transcendental attributes (*saviśeṣa-brahma*). He then mercifully showed Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya His six-armed form. Sārvabhauma's pride was shattered and he attained transcendental knowledge.



The Gaura-Nitāī deities in the Vidyānagara temple

He became a devotee of the Lord and one of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates.

Vidyānagara is the place of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's scholastic pastimes. As Nimāī Paṇḍita He used to come here and playfully defeat Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya's disciples with His sharp logic. Even eminent teachers feared debating with Him.

Vidyānagara is the abode of the nine kinds of devotional service. Prauḍhāmāyā resides here eternally and renders service to Śrī Gaurasundara by keeping non-devotees away from *bhakti*. She does this by bewildering them with ignorance. *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is the only real knowledge (*vidyā*), and its shadow is ignorance (*avidyā*). Both *vidyā* and *avidyā* reside in Śrī Gaura-dhāma and, directly and indirectly, render eternal service to the Lord.



Chapter 7

Śrī Jahnudvīpa



Jahnudvīpa extends throughout the present Jānnagara, and is non-different from Bhadravana in Vraja. Previously, the river Jāhnavī (Gaṅgā) flowed nearby. Śrīman Mahāprabhu used to pass through here while performing *saṅkīrtana* with His associates, so it is a place of Mahāprabhu's *kīrtana* and other pastimes. Jānnagara, the local name of Jahnudvīpa, is Jahnu Muni's place of worship. He so pleased Śrī Gaurahari with his worship that the Lord appeared before him, golden and effulgent. Jahnu Muni became immersed in infinite spiritual joy and requested Mahāprabhu to be able to reside in Navadvīpa birth after birth. Śrīman Mahāprabhu blessed him, saying, "When in the future, My pastimes manifest, you will be able to witness them."

Jahnu Muni performed his worship in this small forest in Navadvīpa, and one day, while meditating upon the Lord's pastimes, he entered *samādhi*. Elsewhere, King Bhagīratha, having pleased Brahmā and Śiva, was bringing the Gaṅgā from Gaṅgotrī to the great ocean via Haridvāra, Prayāga, Kāśī and other places, with the purpose of delivering his 60,000 ancestors, the sons of King Sagara, who had been burned to ashes near Śrī Kapila Muni's hermitage.

Mahārāja Bhagīratha's chariot raced ahead of Bhagavatī-Gaṅgā, who made rippling sounds as she flowed along. When he came to Jahnu Muni's *āśrama* Bhagīratha paid his obeisances to the sage and continued, with the Surasari-Gaṅgā flowing closely behind him. The Gaṅgā's dancing waves revealed her extreme delight to have entered Śrī Gaura-dhāma. She was not conscious of her body, and as she passed by Jahnu Muni's hut, she swept away a part of it, as well as his water pot and some other belongings. The Gaṅgā's rippling sound, sprinkles of her water and a cool breeze broke the sage's



Jānnagara

meditation. Initially he was angry, but in a moment he realised that this stream of water was not ordinary. In fact, it had come from the Causal Ocean, and Lord Brahmā had used it to wash Śrī Vāmanadeva's feet. That same water was now flowing as the very pure water of *patita-pāvanī* Bhagavatī-Gaṅgā, who is rarely attained by the demigods. With great faith Jahnu Muni bowed his head, promptly scooped all the Gaṅgā's water into his hollowed palm and drank it. This left the Gaṅgā, who was flowing from above, unable to proceed. Bhagīratha was most perturbed, but somehow he pleased the sage, who scratched his thigh. With a rippling sound, the Gaṅgā emerged from it and encircled the entire area of Śrī Navadvīpa, flowing in such a way as to divide the land into nine parts. Since then, it has been called Navadvīpa, or "nine islands". Because she had entered the sage's stomach and manifested again from his thigh, Śrī Gaṅgā became known as Śrī Jahnu Muni's dear daughter Jāhnavī, and this place became known as Jahnudvīpa.



Jāhnavī-Gaṅgā

The Purāṇas give another narration about Śrī Gaṅgā. In Goloka, Gaṅgā is Kṛṣṇa's beloved *sakhī*. Once in a secluded part

of Goloka she was deeply absorbed in charming ambrosial talks with Kṛṣṇa, when suddenly she noticed Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her *sakhīs* approaching. Gaṅgā became embarrassed and in her embarrassment she turned into water. Smiling, Rādhikā asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "Where did that *sakhī* of Yours go?" Kṛṣṇa made the gestures of one trying to excuse himself and said, "Apart from You there is no other *sakhī* here." Śrīmatī Rādhikā understood Kṛṣṇa's words and accepted Gaṅgā as Her *sakhī*. The Gaṅgā, as water, is eternally situated in Goloka, as is the Yamunā. A portion of the Gaṅgā is manifest as the Causal Ocean, with which Lord Brahmā washed Śrī Vāmanadeva's lotus feet.

Once, in Emperor Akbara's court in Agra a question arose as to which of the two rivers – the Gaṅgā or the Yamunā – was superior. A discussion ensued. Kings, feudal princes and royal scholars who resided on the banks of the Gaṅgā stated she was superior. And those living on the banks of Śrī Yamunā asserted that she was superior. The controversy could not be resolved. At that time, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was performing *bhajana* in Vṛndāvana, having accepted a vow to remain in a holy place of pilgrimage (*kṣetra-sannyāsa*). In his time, he was celebrated as the world's most learned saintly personality. With much honour and faith, Akbara summoned Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī to Agra in the hope that he could resolve this issue, but Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was not prepared to leave Vraja, even for one day. Upon the Emperor's strong insistence Jīva Gosvāmī finally agreed to go on the condition that he could return to Vraja the same day. The Emperor made all travel arrangements, and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī thus attended the royal court.

After hearing the arguments on both sides Jīva Gosvāmī gave his conclusion, "According to the scriptures, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. Śrī Vāmanadeva is a part of a part of Lord Śrī

Kṛṣṇa Himself, and Śrī Gaṅgā is the water that washed His lotus feet. On the other hand, Śrī Yamunā, or Kālindī, is one of the queens of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As His dearmost beloved she is non-different from Him. Now, you can decide who is superior. The benefit one gets from taking bath in the Gaṅgā is attained simply by thinking of the Yamunā. By bathing in the Gaṅgā sins are removed, but by bathing in the Yamunā one will attain *kṛṣṇa-prema* and *vraja-prema*. Kṛṣṇa enjoys performing pastimes with His *sakhās* and *sakhīs* on Yamunā's bank and in her waters.

"But a special consideration is to be made in this connection. Śrī Gaṅgā joins with Śrī Yamunā at Prayāga, and together they proceed to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, the place of Mahāprabhu's pastimes. The Gaṅgā flows on the eastern side and the Yamunā flows on the western side. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu performs His various pastimes in the combination of these two waters. Such great fortune places the Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī Gaṅgā on an equal status to Śrī Yamunā. The Gaṅgā is capable of giving *gaura-prema*, which is non-different from *kṛṣṇa-prema*."

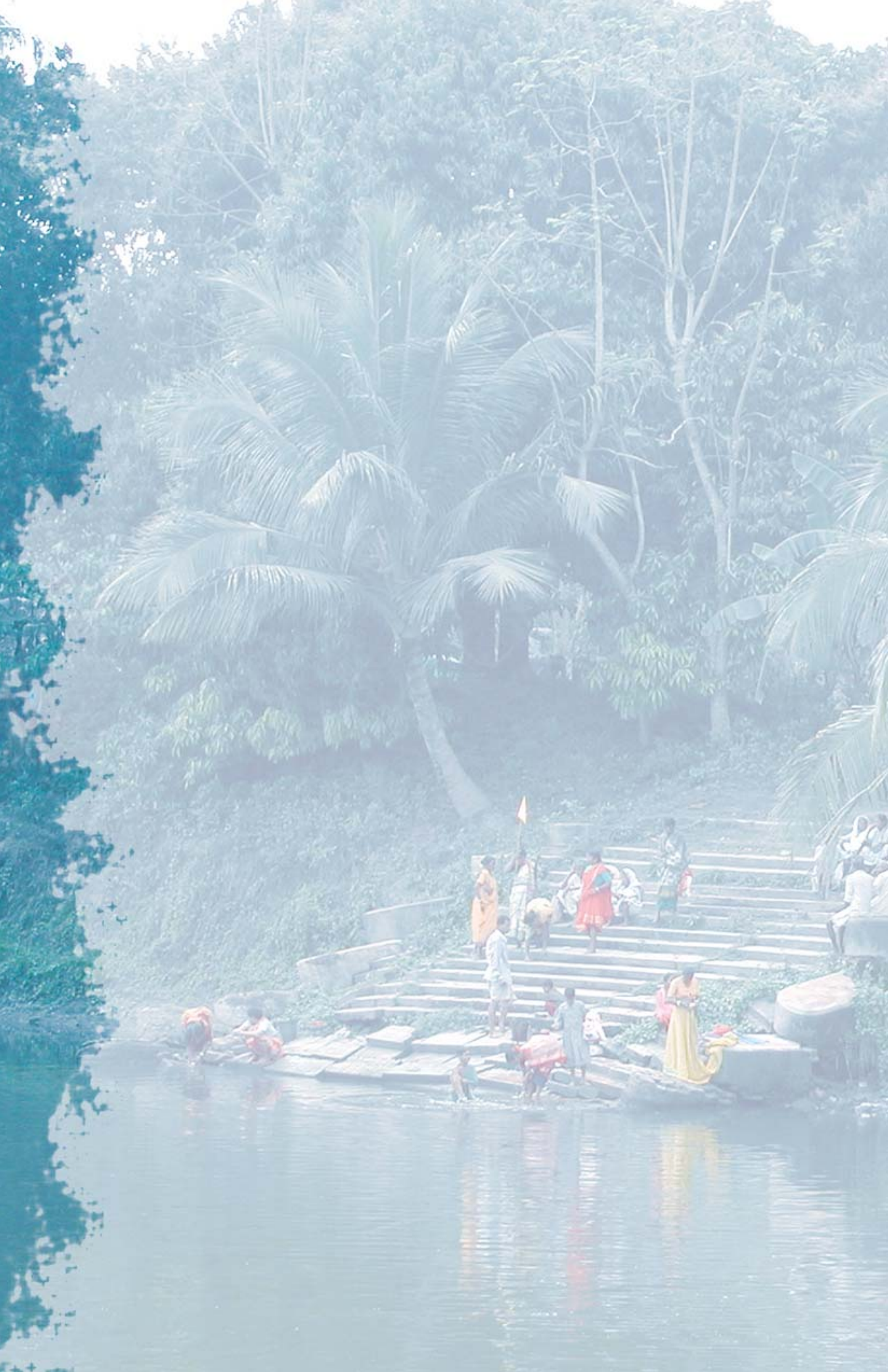
All members of the assembly appreciated Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī's conclusion, and Emperor Akbara had also received the great fortune of having his *darśana*.

Bhīṣma-ṭilā

Bhīṣma-ṭilā is situated near Jānnagara. Bhīṣmadeva came here to meet with his maternal grandfather, Śrī Jahnu Muni, and stayed with him for some time. Daily, Bhīṣma heard narrations about the Lord and received various instructions from Jahnu Muni about Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva and His appearance in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. He explained that after some time, at the beginning of Kali-yuga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa would appear as Śrī Gaurāṅga and give

kṛṣṇa-nāma and *kṛṣṇa-prema* to both qualified and unqualified living entities all over the world. He would even drive the trees, creepers, birds and animals mad with *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

He further educated Bhīṣmadeva in politics, laws of religion, laws of society and in the subtle rules of *dharma*, and he imparted knowledge about the soul and matter (*ātmā-anātmā*), matter and consciousness (*jaḍa-cetana*), the reality of the living entity (*jīva-tattva*), the reality of the illusory energy (*māyā-tattva*), the reality of the Supreme Personality (*bhagavat-tattva*), the reality of the nature of devotional service (*bhakti-tattva*) and so on. The *jīva* is an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord, but because he is opposed to this service, he has fallen into the cycle of birth and death in the illusory material world, and is scorched by the three-fold miseries. By the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master the *jīva* can hear narrations about the Supreme Lord and chant His name in the association of Vaiṣṇavas. In this way, he can attain his *svarūpa*, or original constitutional form. This is the essential teaching of all religions. When, at the time of his death, Grandfather Bhīṣma was lying on his bed of arrows, he imparted the instructions he heard from Śrī Jahnu Muni to the distressed Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and the other Pāṇḍavas. The place where Bhīṣmadeva resided is known as Bhīṣma-ṭilā.





Chapter 8

Śrī Modadrumadvīpa

Modadrumadvīpa, also known as Māmagāchī, is Bhāṇḍīravana in Vraja. In a previous *kalpa*, Śrī Rāmacandra, together with His younger brother Lakṣmaṇa and His wife Sītājī, were banished to the forest on the order of His father and stayed for some time at Modadrumadvīpa. In this beautiful forest was a banyan tree, and on its branches, which extended far and wide, sat many kinds of birds sweetly chirping their unending song. The beauty of Modadrumadvīpa captivated their hearts, and Śrī Rāmacandra asked Lakṣmaṇa to construct a hut made from leaves under this tree. Here they stayed for some time.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura relates the following pastime in his *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*: Once as Lord Rāmacandra was observing the extraordinary beauty of this forest, He began to smile. Sītā asked Him why He was smiling, and Śrī Rāma replied, "In this forthcoming Kali-yuga, I will take birth from the womb of Mother Śacī in Śrī Jagannātha Miśra's house in this same Navadvīpa-dhāma. People will know Me as Gaurāṅga, and I will charm everyone by performing a variety of enchanting pastimes. I will manifest the glory of the holy name and thus madden the common people with the chanting of these names. I will change the hearts of even the sinners and give them love of God, which even the demigods rarely attain. In My youth I will accept *sannyāsa*, after which I will reside in Śrī Jagannātha Purī. At that time My mother Śacī-devī, who is none other than Kauśalyā, will weep holding her daughter-in-law Viṣṇupriyā in her arms. You will be that Viṣṇupriyā. I will thereafter remain in Purī and will also weep for you day and night."

Sītājī inquired, "Why will You perform such pastimes?"

Śrī Rāma answered, "I will appear in this world as Gaurāṅga just to teach the living entities *prema-bhakti*.

"*Prema-bhakti* is tasted in two ways: meeting (*sambhoga*) and separation (*vipralambha*). In *sambhoga-rasa* the pleasure one receives in meeting is prominent. In *vipralambha-rasa*, in the distress of separation, one attains the happiness of constant internal meeting in which everything external is forgotten. Only in separation do one-pointed *rasika* devotees attain the unlimited bliss of service. Without *vipralambha*, *sambhoga-rasa* is not nourished and instead tastes like *vipralambha*. Therefore in *vipralambha*, *rasa* is a million times more relishable than in *sambhoga*.

"When I appear as Gaurāṅga, Mother Kauśalyā, together with Aditi-devī, will appear as Śacī-devī, and you will be My wife Viṣṇupriyā. Later, in this incarnation as Rāma, I will find an excuse to abandon you, and send you to the hermitage of Vālmīki. Then in separation from you, I will make a golden Sītā and worship you. In the same way, in My incarnation as Gaura, you will manifest a deity of Me as Gaurāṅga after I renounce My home, and you will worship Me in Navadvīpa. Through the pastimes of Gaurāṅga, I will teach the world the excellence of *vipralambha-rasa*.

"Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is dear to Me, even more so than Ayodhyā. This banyan tree will become famous as Rāma-vaṭa, but it will disappear at the beginning of Kali-yuga."

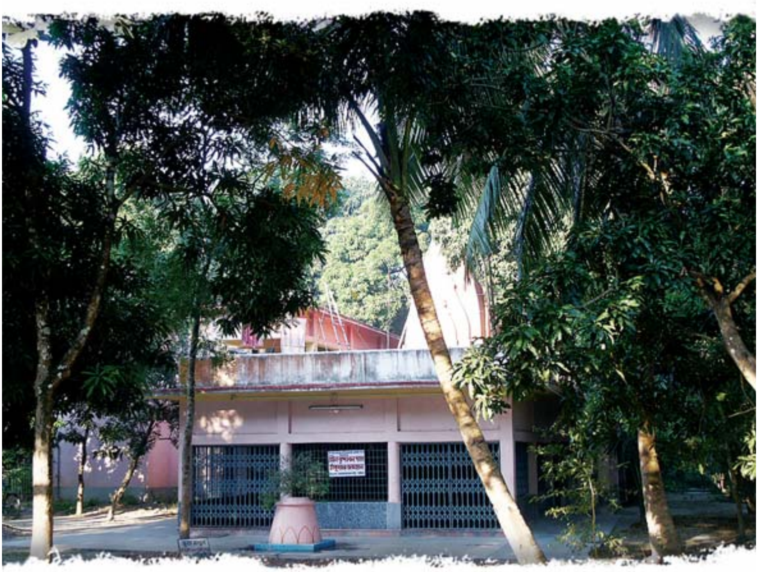
After staying here for some time, Śrī Rāmacandra, together with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, departed for Daṇḍakāraṇya.

By the desire of Śrī Rāmacandra, His dear friend Guhaka, the King of Niṣāda, took birth here in the house of a *brāhmaṇa* as Sadānanda Bhaṭṭācārya. Sadānanda Bhaṭṭācārya had one-pointed firm faith in Rāmacandra and was present in Śrī Jagannātha Miśra's house at the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance. When he took *darśana* of baby Nimāī he saw Him

as Śrī Rāmacandra. He later had *darśana* of Śrī Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, with Śrī Hanumān folding his hands at their feet. Sadānanda Bhaṭṭācārya often used to come to the house of Jagannātha Miśra to take *darśana* of the child Nimāī. When, after some time, Śrīman Mahāprabhu inaugurated His *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, Sadānanda performed *kīrtana* in Mahāprabhu's group and was overwhelmed with transcendental bliss.

Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's place of residence

Modadrumadvīpa is the appearance-place of Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*. He is non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa. His mother was Śrī Nārāyaṇī-devī, the niece of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associate Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. When she was young, this devout child



The appearance-place of Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura



The Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda deities (left) of Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura (right)

lovingly accepted *mahā-prasāda* remnants from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who had much affection for her. In due course of time, Nārāyaṇī-devī married into a *brāhmaṇa* family from this place.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established Śrī Modadruma Gauḍīya Maṭha here. Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda and Śrī Jagannātha, the deities served by Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, are still worshipped here.

Śrī Mālinī-devī's father's house and Śrī Vāsudeva Datta's residence

The house of the father of Śrī Mālinī-devī, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's wife, was here, near the house of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura. The residence of Śrī Sāraṅga and Murārī, both of whom are associates of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, is close by. After Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa* and left Navadvīpa, they were unable to remain in Navadvīpa due to separation from Him, so they moved here

and performed their *bhajana*. Śrī Madana-Gopāla, the deity established by Śrī Vāsudeva Datta Ṭhākura, the younger brother of Śrī Mukunda Datta Ṭhākura from Caṭṭagrāma, is worshipped here to this day.

Śrī Vāsudeva Datta Ṭhākura was an associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who generously spent all he had in the service of the Supreme Lord, keeping nothing for the future. He was a topmost devotee. Śrīman Mahāprabhu praised him saying, "This body of Mine is the property of Vāsudeva only. Wherever he sells Me, I will be sold. This fact I state three times." Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya, the initiating spiritual master of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, was a disciple of Śrī Vāsudeva Datta Ṭhākura.

Once, Śrī Vāsudeva Datta requested Śrīman Mahāprabhu, "Let me accept on my head the sins of all the living entities in the world. I will suffer for their sins birth after birth. You can then remove their material bondage and liberate them."

Śrī Vāsudeva Datta rendered service to Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas with such magnanimity that Śrīman Mahāprabhu appointed Śrī Śivānanda Sena as Vāsudeva Datta's *sarakhela*, or accountant, to look after his assets and oversee his expenses.

Śrī Sāraṅgadeva Murārī's residence

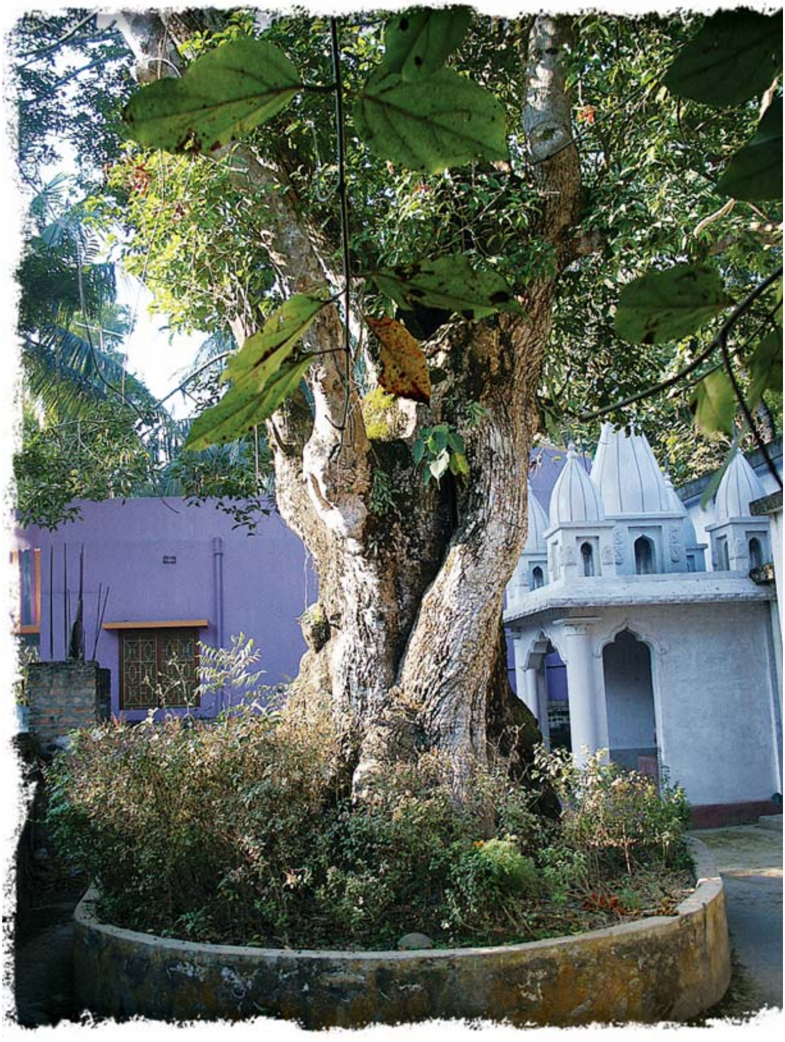
Śrī Sāraṅgadeva, an associate of Śrī Gaura, resided here in Māmagachī. Once, as Śrī Gaurasundara was returning home with Śrīvāsa and Śrī Sāraṅgadeva, having reprimanded Devānanda Paṇḍita, He turned to Sāraṅgadeva and asked, "Sāraṅgadeva, why don't you accept a disciple? It must be an endeavour for you to do all the work in the *āśrama*, to serve the deities and then join Me in *saṅkīrtana*.



The presiding deities being worshipped at Sāraṅga Murārī's residence: Śrī Rādha-Madana-gopāla of Vāsudeva Datta (center, large), and in front of Them Śrī Rādha-Gopīnātha of Sāraṅga Murārī

Sāraṅgadeva replied, "I cannot find a qualified disciple, therefore I accept no one."

Mahāprabhu said, "Whomever you accept as a disciple will become qualified."



The ancient *bakula* tree at Sāraṅgadeva's residence

Sāraṅgadeva then agreed. "I will accept as a disciple the first person I meet tomorrow." He then paid his obeisances to the Lord and returned to his *āśrama*. The next morning Sāraṅgadeva got up and went to take bath in the Gaṅgā. There

he saw the dead body of a boy floating in the water. Remembering Mahāprabhu's order, Sāraṅgadeva brought that dead boy to the riverbank and recited the *dīkṣā-mantra* into his ear. Astonishingly, when the *mantra* entered the boy's ear he returned to life. Paying his prostrated obeisances at Śrī Sāraṅgadeva's feet he said, "Yesterday, on the occasion of my sacred thread ceremony, I was bitten by a poisonous black snake. I don't know what happened after that."

When the boy's parents, relatives and friends heard that he was alive again they came to the place of Śrī Sāraṅgadeva. They embraced the boy and said, "When you were bitten by that snake no remedy could save you. Since the body of a person who has died of a snake bite cannot be burned, we placed you in the Gaṅgā, and by the mercy of Śrī Sāraṅgadeva you have returned to life." They wanted the boy, Murārī, to go home with them, but he would not go. This boy, who later became known as Śrī Murārī Ṭhākura, firmly vowed to spend his entire life in the service of Śrī Sāraṅgadeva.

At Sāraṅgadeva's residence there was a huge *bakula* tree. Even today this ancient tree, which is completely hollow inside, stands as witness to this event.

Vaikuṇṭhapura

This village, situated on the north-western border of Modadrumadvīpa, is where Śrī Nārāyaṇa is eternally worshipped in Navadvīpa-dhāma, together with His three potencies – Śrī, Bhū and Līlā. The reflected rays emanating from this transcendental land are called Brahman. Only one who has transcendental vision can have *darśana* of this abode.

Once when Nārada Ṛṣi went to Śrī Vaikuṇṭha, he could not find Śrī Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa there. He inquired from their



Śrī Rāmānuja Ācārya

associates as to their whereabouts. They answered that Śrī Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa had gone to Navadvīpa-dhāma on the Earth planet, so Nārada Ṛṣi came to this place where he was able to have their *darśana*. Pleased with him, Śrī Nārāyaṇa revealed to him His form as Śrī Gaurāṅga. The place where Nārada had this *darśana* became known as Vaikuṇṭhapura.

There is another more confidential story about this place. For some time Śrī Rāmānuja Ācārya stayed in Śrīkṣetra Jagannātha Purī and rendered service to Śrī Jagannāthadeva. Once Śrī Jagannātha mercifully ordered him: "Journey to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma and take *darśana* of that place. After some time, I will appear there as Śrī Gaurāṅga and distribute *kṛṣṇa-prema* to the common people everywhere through *kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana*. Leave your disciples here in Puri and go alone to Navadvīpa, which is a million times superior to Śrī Raṅgam. When you have taken *darśana* of Navadvīpa you should return to your place at Kūrmācala." Śrī Rāmānuja thus came here on the order of Śrī Jagannāthadeva. When he took *darśana* of Lord Vaiṅkaṭeśvara he saw Him as Śrī Gaurāṅga. This *darśana* of Śrī Gauracandra made Rāmānuja Ācārya so restless that he declared, "I will never leave Navadvīpa-dhāma and go elsewhere. I will remain here to witness Your coming pastimes in this place." Śrī Gaurasundara told him, "Your desire will be

fulfilled. You will take birth here when My pastimes manifest," and then He disappeared.

By the desire of the Lord, Śrī Rāmānuja Ācārya returned to South India where he began to preach *dāsya-bhakti*, devotion in the mellow of servitude. With his philosophy, called *viśiṣṭādvaitavāda*, he defeated the impersonal *advaitavāda* of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya using scriptural evidence and sharp logic. He is acknowledged as the founder of the Śrī *sampradāya*, which is one of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* in Kali-yuga. The literatures he wrote, such as a commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra* known as *Śrī-bhāṣya*, are famous.

During the advent of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Rāmānuja took birth in a *brāhmaṇa* family. His name was Śrī Ananta and he participated in the marriage ceremony of Śrī Nimāī Paṇḍita and Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā.

Mahatpura

Mahatpura is Kāmyavana in Vraja-maṇḍala. During their forest exile, Draupadī, Yudhiṣṭhira and the other Pāṇḍavas came to the village of Ekacakrā. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira was gladdened by its beauty. One night in a dream he received *darśana* of Śrī Baladeva Prabhu, who showed him His form of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Nityānanda Prabhu told him about Śrī Gaurāṅga's coming incarnation and instructed him to take *darśana* of the nearby Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. Consequently, the Pāṇḍavas came to this place near Māyāpura on the Gaṅgā's bank where they worshipped Śrī Gaurasundara. Being pleased with their worship, Śrī Gaurasundara appeared before them and described the glories of the Lord's holy name and His own future pastimes. Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja, his brothers and wife became joyfully intoxicated in *gaura-prema* and started to dance. The place



Mahatpura presently known as Matapura

where they received *darśana* of Śrī Mahāprabhu has become famous as Mahatpura. Five banyan trees once stood here as well as a hillock named Yudhiṣṭhira-vedī, but now they have all have disappeared.

Śrī Madhvācārya and his disciples stayed here for some time and thus attained the mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In Kali-yuga Śrī Madhvācārya is acknowledged as the main *ācārya* in the Śrī Brahma *sampradāya*, one of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*. This *sampradāya* descends from Brahmā to Nārada and then to Vyāsa, who is Nārada's disciple and the spiritual master of Śrī Madhvācārya. The Madhva *sampradāya* is named after him.

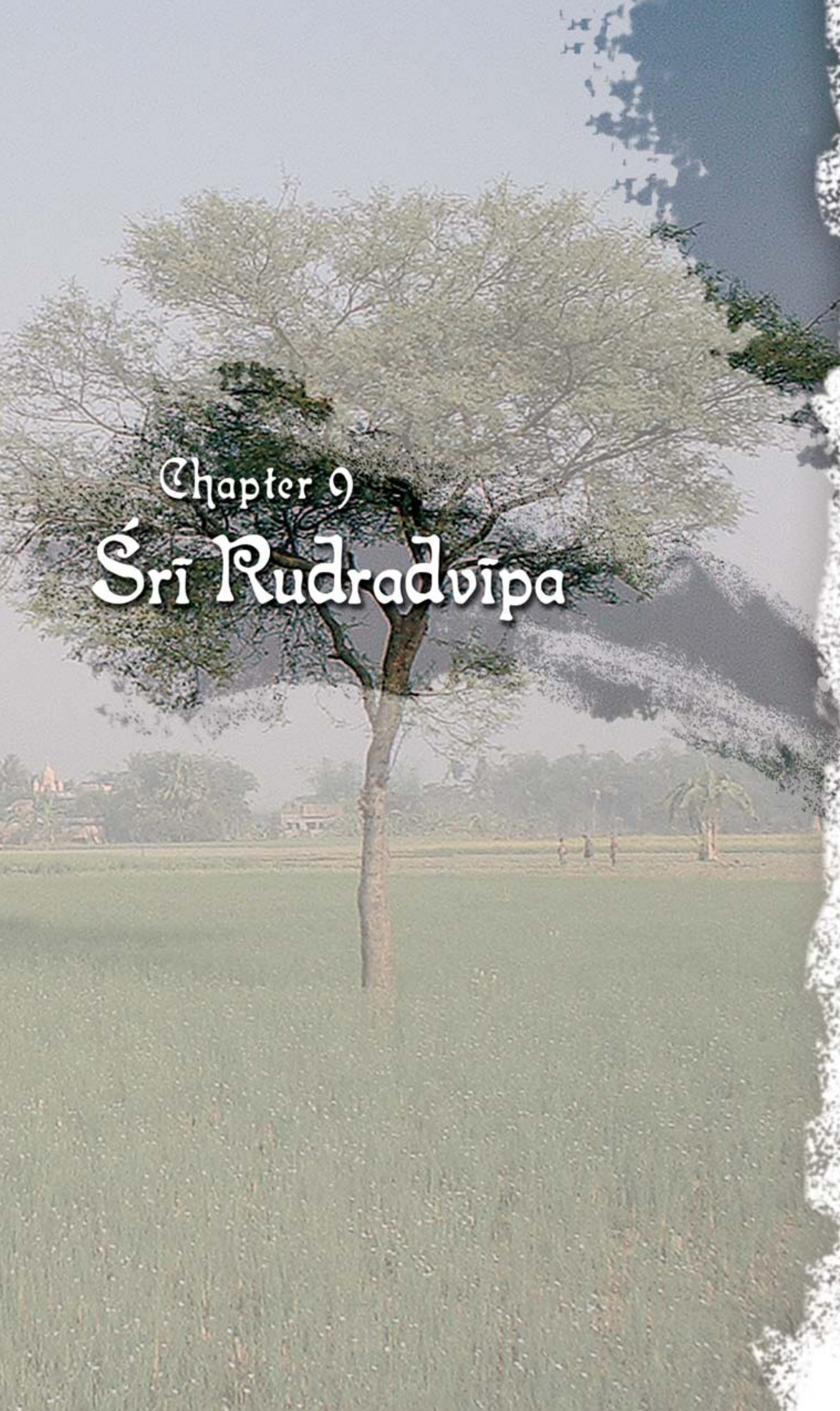
Śrī Madhvācārya is the propounder of *dvaitavāda*. According to this philosophy five types of differences (*bheda*) are eternal: (1) the difference between Brahman and the living entity (*jīva*), (2) the difference between *jīva* and *jīva*, (3) the difference between *jīva* and *jaḍa* (inert matter), (4) the difference between *jaḍa* and *jaḍa*, and (5) the difference between Brahman and *jaḍa*. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Brahman, and He is all powerful (*sarva-śaktimān*). The *jīvas* are His parts and parcels, and are

of two types: conditioned and liberated. *Bhagavad-bhakti,* devotion to the Lord, is the main *sādhana*. Moreover, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person, and the *jīva* is His eternal servant. Because of these philosophical points, Śrī Mādhavendra Purīpāda, the seed of the desire tree of *prema*, and his disciples Īśvara Purīpāda, Advaita Ācārya, Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, Paramānanda Purī and other prominent associates of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, have appeared in this disciplic lineage. Śrīman Mahāprabhu accepted Vaiṣṇava initiation from Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda and therefore, this disciplic lineage is named Śrī Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya.*

Śrī Madhvācārya worshipped Śrī Gaurasundara for some time here. This is where he had *darśana* of the resplendent golden form of Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari, who instructed Madhvācārya saying, "You are My eternal servant. Very soon I will appear in Navadvīpa-dhāma. I will accept initiation into your disciplic lineage and distribute pure, unalloyed *prema-bhakti* and the holy name throughout the world. Now you should travel all over India and with scriptural evidence and sharp logic refute the non-vedic hidden Buddhism preached by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. The body of Bhagavān eternally exists and is composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss. This Supreme Brahman is the fountainhead of all transcendental qualities. The living entity can never become the Supreme Brahman; the relationship between them is that of master and servant. Preach this truth everywhere, but do not reveal the secret of My coming pastimes for now."

Saying this, Śrī Gaurahari disappeared. Thereafter, on His instruction, Śrī Madhvācārya travelled widely eliminating impersonalism (*māyāvāda*) and disseminating *bhakti.*





Chapter 9
Śrī Rudradvīpa

Rudradvīpa extends to villages such as Rādupura, Śaṅkarapura, Rudrapāḍā, Nidayā-ghāṭa and Ṭoṭā. *Jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established Śrī Rudradvīpa Gauḍīya Maṭha here.

Śrī Rudradeva (Lord Śiva) knew that golden-complexioned Gaurahari would appear in Nadīyā and distribute the holy name and love of God everywhere so he came here with his associates before Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance. He began to chant the name of Gaura and dance, and the demigods showered him with flowers. When Śrī Gaurasundara saw Rudradeva's absorption in *kīrtana*, He appeared before him and told him about His descent in the coming Kali-yuga. He then disappeared.

Learned persons say that Nīla-lohita and the other ten Rudras worship Gauracandra at this place, and therefore it is called Rudradvīpa. Kailāsa-dhāma (Lord Śiva's abode) is merely the radiance of this Rudradvīpa. Abandoning the path of impersonalism, which is opposed to devotional service, Aṣṭāvakra, Dattātreya and other sages worship Bhagavān here and to attain *bhakti*.

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya also came here, but Rudradeva forbade him to preach impersonalism in Śrī Navadvīpa-maṇḍala, so he went elsewhere. The *ācārya* of *śuddhādvaita*, Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī, acquired Rudradeva's mercy and manifested the Śrī Rudra Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* in Kali-yuga. At this place Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave His mercy to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, whose commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, known as *Bhāvārtha-dīpīka*, was greatly revered by Mahāprabhu.

For some time Rudradvīpa was situated on the Gaṅgā's western bank. When Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī performed his *dhāma-parikramā*, this island was situated on both the eastern and western banks of the Gaṅgā, and in Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's time it

was situated on the eastern bank. Nowadays part of Rudradvīpa is also situated on the western bank again.

Bilvapakṣa

The vernacular form of the name Bilvapakṣa is Bela Pokhariyā. This is Baelvana in Vraja. Respectable *brāhmaṇas* used to worship Mahādeva with *bilva* (*bael*) leaves here; therefore it became known as Bilvapakṣa or Bela Pokhariyā.

Śrī Nimbāditya Ācārya was one of those *brāhmaṇas*. He was the highly learned founder-*ācārya* of the Śrī Catuḥsana *sampradāya*, one of the Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* in Kali-yuga. His philosophical doctrine is known as *dvaitādvaita*. According to his line of thought the living entity and inert matter are simultaneously one with and different from Brahman. From the perspective of the transcendental substance (*vastu*), there is no difference between the living entity and Brahman, but the living entity is minute, ignorant and subject to illusion, and his intrinsic nature is that of a servant. Brahman is complete eternity, knowledge and bliss. He possesses all potencies in full and is the master of the living entity and inert matter. Since the material world is also produced by Bhagavān's potency, it is both different and non-different from Brahman.

Sanaka and the three other Kumāras worshipped Śrī Gaura at this place. Infused with their potency, Śrī Nimbāditya Ācārya preached pure devotion (*bhedābheda-tattva*). There are four main Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*. Each *sampradāya* has its own founder – Śrī (Lakṣmī), Brahmā, Rudra and Sanat Kumāra. In Kali-yuga Śrī accepted Rāmānuja as the founder-*ācārya*, Brahmā accepted Madhvācārya, Rudra accepted Viṣṇusvāmī and Sanat Kumāra accepted Nimbāditya. All four refuted Śrī Śaṅkara's impersonalism and propagated *bhakti*.



Rāmānuja



Madhvācārya



Nimbāditya



Viṣṇusvāmī

The founder-*ācāryas* of the four main Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*

Śrī Nimbāditya Ācārya worshipped Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa here and received Their *darśana* in Their form as Śrī Gaurasundara. He took birth around the time of Mahāprabhu's manifest pastimes as Digvijayī Keśava Kāśmīrī. Śrīman Mahāprabhu defeated him and instructed him to perform *bhajana* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Bharadvāja-ṭīlā, or Bhāruī-ḍāṅgā

Bharadvāja-ṭīlā is situated north-west of Gaṅgā-nagara. When Śrīnivāsa Ācārya performed *parikramā* of Navadvīpa-dhāma, Bharadvāja-ṭilā was a prosperous town situated on a hill (*ṭilā*). The corrupted form of the name Bharadvāja-ṭilā is Bhāruī-ḍāṅgā. While visiting different holy places, Bharadvāja Ṛṣi came here from Prayāga and worshipped Śrī Gaurahari at Cakrahṛda or Cākadaha, on the Gaṅgā's bank.

Bharadvāja Ṛṣi was a disciple of the original poet Vālmīki and he was very powerful. During His exile to the forest, Śrī Rāmacandra came to his *āśrama* together with Sītājī and Lakṣmaṇa. Bharadvāja Ṛṣi was omniscient, and knew where the coming incarnation of Śrīman Mahāprabhu would perform His pastimes; therefore he came to Navadvīpa-dhāma.

Nidayā-ghāṭa

This *ghāṭa* is situated on the Gaṅgā's eastern bank. Śrī Gaura only informed certain devotees, such as Gadādhara Paṇḍita and Candraśekhara Ācārya, about His intention to take *sannyāsa*. One evening as Śrī Gaurasundara roamed throughout all quarters of Navadvīpa and lovingly met with the devotees and citizens there, Śrīdhara gave Him a *laukī* (bottle-gourd). The cowherd men gave Him milk, someone gave Him sandalwood pulp, and someone else a flower garland, and in this way they



Nidayā-ghāṭa

honoured Him. Gaurasundara returned home with the milk and the *laukī*, gave it to Mother Śacī and asked her to prepare *lakalakī* (*laukī* cooked in milk with sugar) from it. The preparation was then offered to Śrī Śālagrāma Bhagavān and distributed to everyone. Mahāprabhu Himself also lovingly relished this preparation.

That night, Gaurasundara spent some time with Viṣṇupriyā for the first time in a long while. He affectionately laughed and spoke sweetly to her, and also decorated her. Viṣṇupriyā became apprehensive; His behaviour had changed so much. On the previous day during her bath in the Gaṅgā she had lost the nose-ring received at her wedding. She knew this loss was most inauspicious and now, as she remembered the incident, she trembled and her fear increased. With the help of Yogamāyā Śrīman Mahāprabhu quickly lulled Viṣṇupriyā into a deep sleep. Then detached, hard-hearted and merciless, He took one last

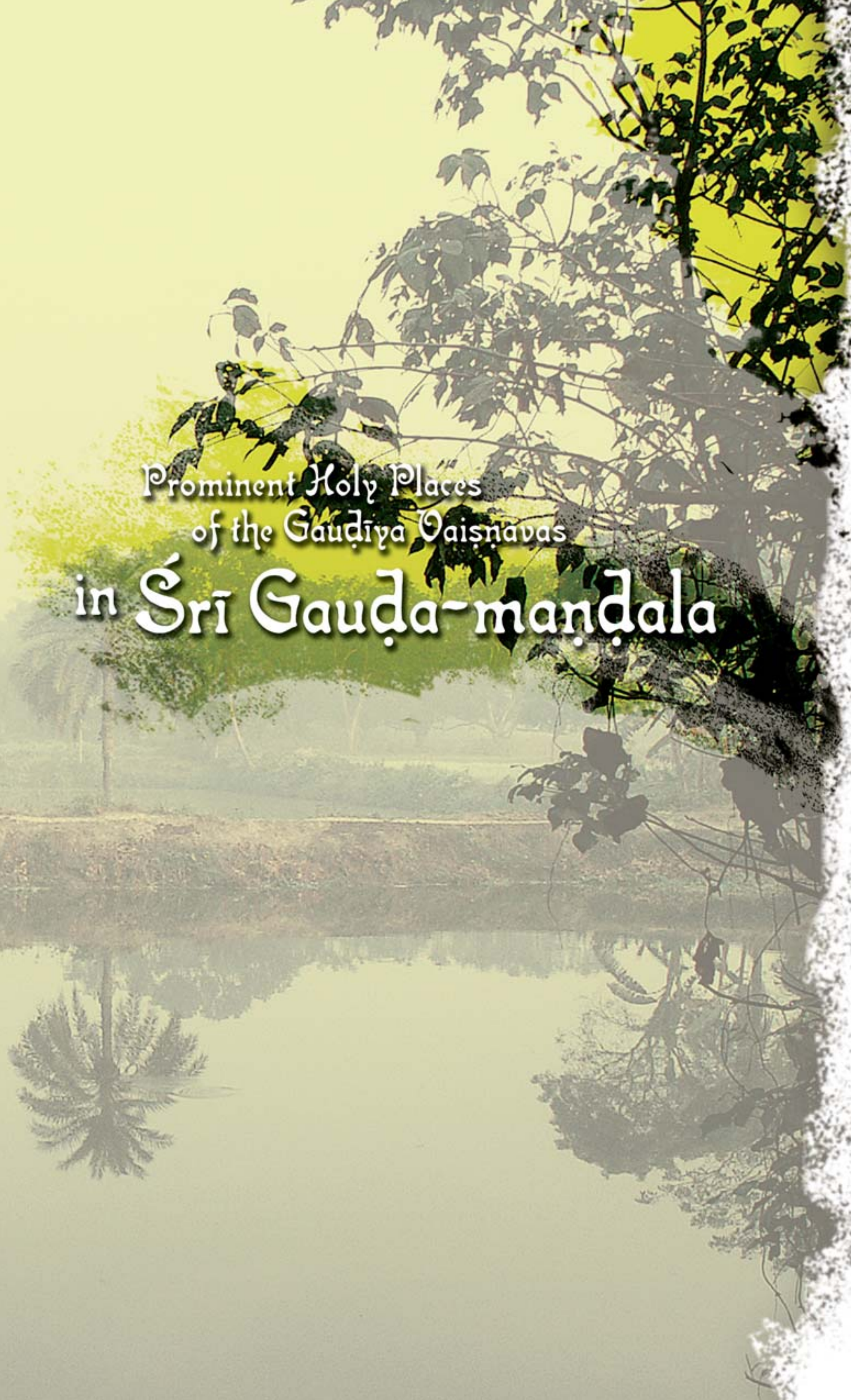
tear-filled look at Viṣṇupriyā. Śrī Śacī-devī stood at the door like a wooden statue, almost inert in separation from Him. She did not even have the strength to weep. Śrī Gaurasundara offered obeisances to His mother, who gazed in silence unable to speak, and left His home. On that wintry night He jumped into the turbulent waters of the Gaṅgā at this *ghāṭa*, crossed the river and went to Kaṇṭaka-nagarī (Kaṭavā) where He accepted the renounced order from Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. Then, via Śāntipura, He went to Śrī Jagannātha Purī. Being very cruel-hearted (*nirdaya*) He left His widowed mother and His wife, and crossed the Gaṅgā at this *ghāṭa*. From that time on this *ghāṭa* became known as Nidayā-ghāṭa.

Part 3

Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala



Prominent Holy Places of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala



The Supreme Lord Himself, Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, appeared about five hundred years ago as Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari in Śrī Māyāpura-dhāma in the ancient land of Gauḍa (Bengal). He came to fulfil His own three desires and to distribute *kṛṣṇa-prema* throughout the world through *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. Kṛṣṇa's associates of Vraja also made their appearances in various places throughout Gauḍa-maṇḍala. Bhagavān's appearance-place is worshipful. Similarly, the appearance-places of His associates, as well as their places of residence and *bhajana*, are also supremely pure and worshipful, and bestow auspiciousness upon the devotees. Vaiṣṇavas enthusiastically visit and circumambulate these places, also called *śrīpāṭas*. Some of the *śrīpāṭas* in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala will now be described.

Ambikā-kālanā

Ambikā-kālanā lies on the bank of the Gaṅgā near Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. Śāntipura, where Śrī Advaita Ācārya resided, is across the Gaṅgā from Ambikā-kālanā. Many devotees lived here, including Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita, his elder brother Sūryadāsa Sarakhela, Śrī Hṛdaya-caitanya (Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu's *guru*), Paramānanda and Kṛṣṇadāsa Sarakhela.



Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita's residence

Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita

Paṇḍita Gaurīdāsa was one of the twelve cowherd boys in the Nityānanda branch of the Caitanya tree. [A beautiful description of the Caitanya tree and its branches is found in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā*, Chapters 9–10.] In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes he was Subala Sakhā. He initially lived in Śāligrāma, and later moved to Ambikā-kālanā.

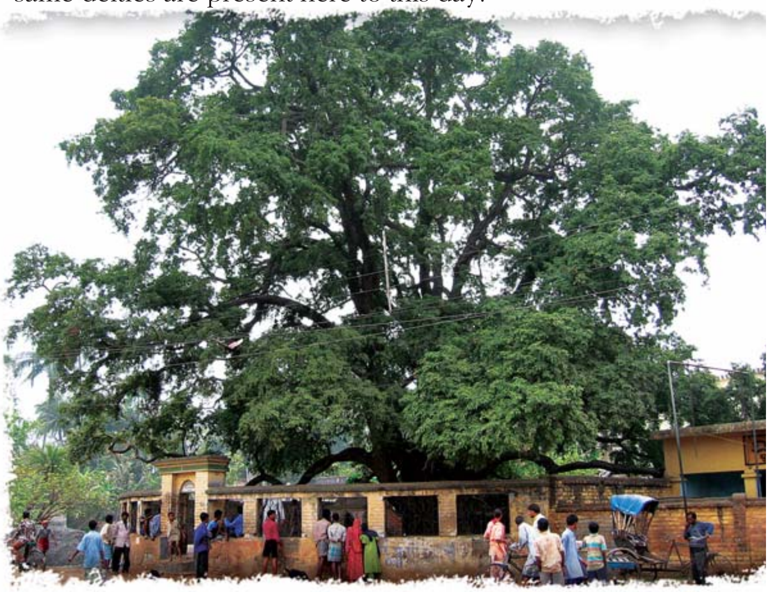
Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita's father was Śrī Kaṁsāri Miśra and his mother was Kamalā-devī. His elder brother was Śrī Sūryadāsa Sarakhela, whose two daughters, Śrī Vasudhā and Śrī Jāhnavā-devī, were married to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. His disciple was Śrī Hṛdaya-caitanya, spiritual master of the famous Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu.

Once Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu took a boat and rowed along the river from the village of Harinadī to



The place where Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu married Vasudhā and Jāhnavā-devī

Ambikā-kālanā. They arrived at the *bhajana-kuṭī* of Gaurīdāsa, who was sitting beneath a nearby tamarind tree. Seeing the two Lords after a long time, Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita repeatedly requested Them to always remain in his home. Śrīman Mahāprabhu created forms of Himself and Nityānanda Prabhu from neem tree wood and gave Them to Gaurīdāsa. He used to talk to these deities, and lovingly feed and serve Them. These same deities are present here to this day.



The tamarind tree



The oar used by Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu to row to Ambikā-kālanā

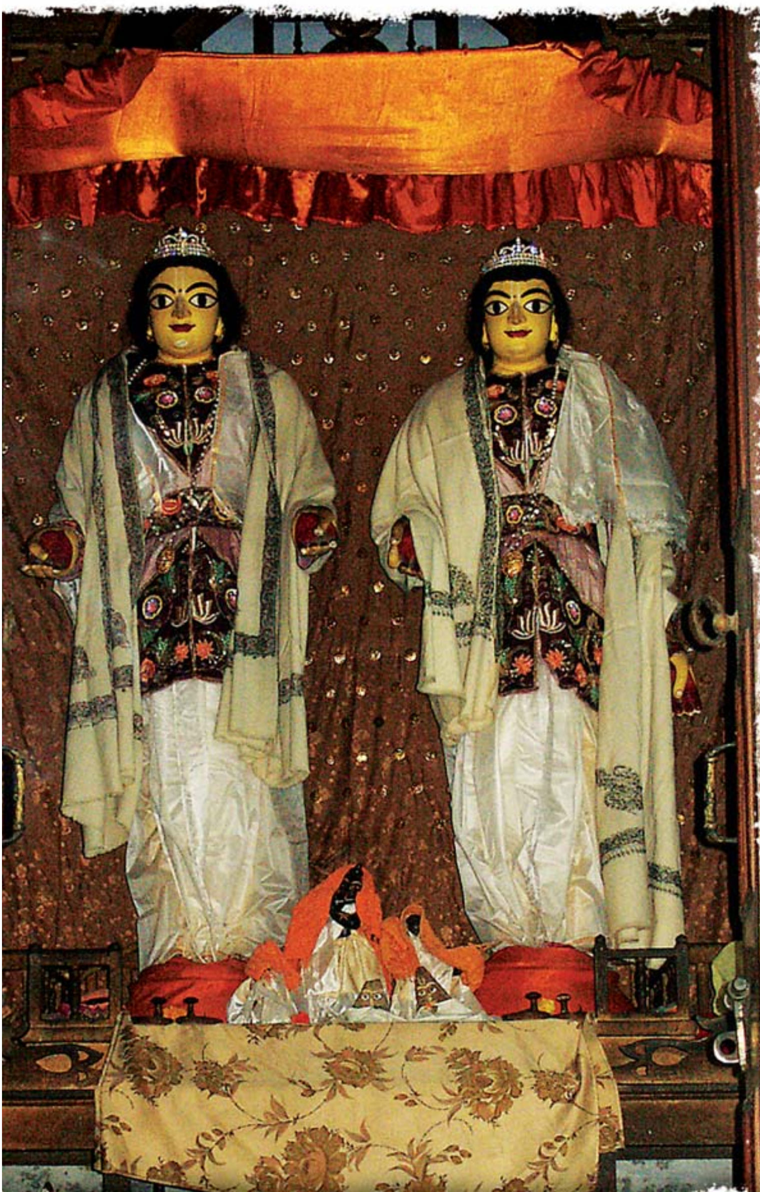


Photo courtesy Śyāmasundara Mandira, Ambikā-kālanā

The deities in Śrī Sūryadāsa Sarakhela's residence

Bālasāgrāma (Rādhānagara)

This is Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa's residence and is situated ten miles east of Rāmapura Hāṭa.

Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa

Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa was a self-realized *premī-bhakta*. He is in the Nityānanda branch of the Caitanya tree. He was invited to attend a twenty-four hour long *nāma-saṅkīrtana* at the house of Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. Upon his arrival, all the Vaiṣṇavas present honoured him, but the *pujārī*, Guṇārṇava Miśra, neither greeted him nor talked with him. Displeased, Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa said, "Here is a second Romaharśaṇa Sūta." (When Romaharśaṇa Sūta did not greet Baladeva Prabhu, Baladeva cut off his head.)

Benāpola

Benāpola is in the Yaśohara district in Bangladesh, near the Indian border. Here Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura used to chant 300,000 holy names daily.



Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's *bhajana kuñja* in Benāpola

Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura


Lakṣahīrā trying to tempt Haridāsa Ṭhākura

Rāmacandra Khān, a wicked and envious landowner, sent the prostitute Lakṣahīrā to Haridāsa Ṭhākura in an attempt to make him deviate from his *bhajana*. Lakṣahirā heard Haridāsa Ṭhākura's pure chanting of the holy name for three successive nights, and her heart became purified. She fell at his feet, weepingly begging forgiveness. Haridāsa Ṭhākura pardoned her. She then gave in charity all she possessed – her house and her entire wealth. Now humble and destitute, she expressed a resolute desire to worship the Supreme Lord, and Haridāsa Ṭhākura initiated her into the Vaiṣṇava-dharma. He instructed her to perform *bhajana* in his *āśrama* on the bank of the Gaṅgā, then he himself left that place. Within a short time she became a greatly renounced ascetic, fully absorbed in *bhajana*. Virtuous people and great saintly persons would come from far away to pay their respects to her.

When Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura lived in Phuliyā, Muslims, who opposed his chanting of the holy name, tried to kill him by whipping him in twenty-two market places. Thinking him dead, they threw him into the Gaṅgā. The mere touch of the Gaṅgā's water, however, returned his body to its original condition and



The deities of Lakṣahīrā (left) and Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura (right)

he went back to his *āśrama*, still chanting the holy name. This so astonished the Muslim rulers that they considered him to be a *pīra*, a living Muslim saint, and granted him permission to chant the holy name.

Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura used to visit Hiraṇya and Govardhana Majūmdāra's royal court, and felt much affection for Govardhana's son, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa. His association had a great impact on the boy. One day in the court, an intense debate ensued between two parties regarding the glory of Bhagavān's holy name. One party stated that the holy name can give liberation, and the other declared this to be impossible. When Haridāsa Ṭhākura arrived at the assembly hall, everybody wanted to know his opinion. His answer was simple and

straightforward: "A mere semblance of the holy name, *nāma-ābhāsa*, can grant liberation, even if one does not desire it. Furthermore, *kṛṣṇa-prema* can be obtained by purely chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa." These words angered one of the *brāhmaṇas* present who said to Haridāsa Ṭhākura, "If a person cannot attain liberation by chanting *harināma*, let your nose fall off! And if it is indeed possible to attain liberation by chanting the holy name, then may my own nose fall off." A tumult ensued as everyone present rose to their feet. Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura unhappily left the assembly. The offensive *brāhmaṇa* was expelled from the royal assembly, and astonishingly, in just a few days, he contracted leprosy and his nose did indeed fall off.

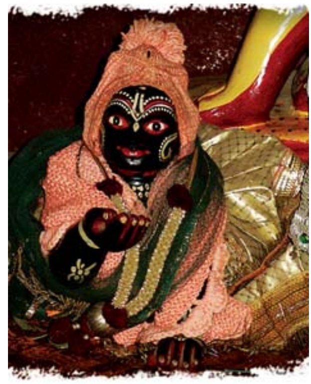
Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's life is filled with many other wonderful pastimes. He is considered to be a combined incarnation of Lord Brahmā and Prahlāda Mahārāja. At the end of his life he came to Purī to be near Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who made him a hut at Siddha-bakula where he could perform *bhajana*. Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs lived with him in Jagannātha Purī. When Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura was leaving his body, Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His associates came to him. With His own hands Mahāprabhu placed him in *samādhi*, and then celebrated his disappearance festival with the devotees.

Buḍhana

Buḍhana, Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's birthplace, is situated in the Sātkhīrā subdivision of the Khulnā district in Bangladesh. Haridāsa Ṭhākura later moved to Phuliyā near Śāntipura and performed *bhajana* there. He would visit Śrī Advaita Ācārya who resided at Śāntipura.

Budhuī-pāḍā

Hemalatā-devī, the eldest daughter of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, was married to Śrī Gopījana-vallabha, the son of Śrī Rāmakiśana Caṭṭarāja, of this village. Yadunandana dāsa, a disciple of Hemalatā-devī, also lived here. Yadunandana translated many Vaiṣṇava literatures. Budhuī-pāḍā is now submerged in the Gaṅgā's waters, and its inhabitants have moved to Naiyālisa-pāḍā.



Hemalatā-devī's Gopāla deity now worshipped in Yājīgrāma

Budhurī

This place is also called Teliyā-budhurī, and is the *śrīpāṭa* of Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja and Govinda Kavirāja.

Cākadaha



Śrī Maheśa Paṇḍita's samādhi

Situated in the Nadīyā district, Cākadaha is the residence of Śrī Maheśa Paṇḍita, who was one of the twelve cowherd boys in the Nityānanda branch of the Caitanya tree. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja he was the cowherd boy Udāra Gopāla. Śrī Pradyumna killed Śambarāsura here, and thus this place is also called Pradyumna-nagara.



The deities said to be established by Śrī Maheśa Paṇḍita in Cākadaha

Cākundī

Cākundī is three miles north of Agradvīpa in the district of Nadīyā. This is Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's birthplace. His *samādhi* is also located here.

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya



Śrīnivāsa Ācārya

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya was born in 1441 of the Śaka Era on Vaiśākhī-pūrṇimā (the full-moon day in April–May in A.D. 1519). His father was a Rāḍhīya *brāhmaṇa* named Śrī Caitanya dāsa. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya was the best of illustrious spiritual preceptors and propagated Vaiṣṇava-vedānta and Vaiṣṇava literature. He also composed a collection of songs about great Vaiṣṇavas. Śrī Ācārya Prabhu contributed significantly to the preaching of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-dharma, and is considered to be a second manifestation of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. His spiritual master is the celebrated Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and he studied Vaiṣṇava philosophy and devotional literature under Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. Śrī Ācārya Prabhu is considered to be the founder of the *kīrtana* style called *manoharaśāhī-svara*. [Also see "Yājīgrāma".]

Cāṅdapāḍā

Cāṅdapāḍā, situated eight miles northeast of the Murśidābād station, is where Śrī Subuddhi Rāya took birth. Once, the Mohammedan governor of Bengal was urged by his wife to throw water from his water pot on Śrī Subuddhi Rāya's face. Consequently Subuddhi Rāya lost his caste. The *brāhmaṇas* advised him to purify himself by drinking boiling ghee and thus give up his life. Subuddhi Rāya, however, had surrendered to

Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who instructed him to chant the holy name and go to Mathurā-Vṛndāvana. Subuddhi Rāya remained in Mathurā-Vṛndāvana where he chanted *harināma* and became a highly elevated saint.

Cāndapura

Cāndapura, a village of Saptagrāma, is the residence of Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya, the spiritual master of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and dear friend of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura. As a result of his association, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī attained the lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Gauracandra.

Cāṭigrāma

This village is situated in the Caṭṭagrāma district and is the birthplace of some of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates, such as Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, Śrī Caitanya Vallabha, Śrī Vāsudeva Datta and Śrī Mukunda Datta.

Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi

Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, who was Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja in *vraja-līlā*, was born in a *brāhmaṇa* family. His father's was Śrī Rāṇeśvara Brahmacārī and his mother was Śrī Gaṅgā-devī. He was the *zamindar* of Candraśālā, and also had a residence and property in Navadvīpa. Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi was a disciple of the illustrious Śrī Mādhavendra Purī. He had a friendship with Śrī Mādhava Miśra, the father of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, and with Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara. Śrī Puṇḍarīka was like a royal sage (*rājarṣi*) and although he engaged in the tasks of a *zamindar* and possessed vast wealth, he was a highly elevated devotee of the Lord. Śrīman Mahāprabhu would refer to him as *bāpa*, or father, and also as "Premanidhi" ("the ocean of *prema*").

Once, Mahāprabhu sent Gadādhara Paṇḍita to visit Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, but upon seeing his affluent lifestyle, which seemed to bespeak of sense gratification, Gadādhara Paṇḍita returned to Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu sent him again to Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, this time with Śrī Mukunda. When Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi heard Mukunda recite the verse *aho bakī yaṁ*... from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he was immediately carried away in ecstasy. He rolled on the ground, tearing his royal clothes, and became covered in dust. He was completely unaware of his body and finally he fell unconscious. This incident made a deep impression on Gadādhara Paṇḍita and he later accepted Vaiṣṇava initiation from him.

One day in Purī, when Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi went for *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha, he noticed that the Lord was wearing new cloth. These new clothes were full of starch so Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi considered them impure and his mind became critical of Lord Jagannātha's priest. That night both Śrī Jagannātha and Śrī Baladeva came to him in a dream. They caught hold of him and laughed as They slapped his cheeks. The next morning, Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi saw his swollen cheeks. Understanding that he had received the great mercy of Lord Jagannātha, he wept tears of transcendental jubilation. "*Aho!* Lord Jagannātha and Baladeva are very merciful. Upon seeing Their dear friend commit a mistake, They corrected him as a good friend would." [Also see "Mekhalā".]

Śrī Mukunda Datta

Mukunda Datta, the younger brother of Vāsudeva Datta, was Mahāprabhu's fellow-student whose singing voice was exceptionally melodic. In *vraja-līlā* he was Madhukaṇṭha Sakhā. He initially lived in Caṭṭaśālā in the Caṭṭagrāma district,

but later took up residence in Navadvīpa. After Śrīman Mahāprabhu accepted *sannyāsa* Mukunda Datta moved to Kāṅcaḍāpāḍā.

Once Śrīman Mahāprabhu admonished him, calling him *khaḍa jāṭhiyā beṭā*[1], and He refused to give him *prema*. Sending a message through Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Mukunda asked Mahāprabhu when he might receive His *darśana* again, and Mahāprabhu replied that he would receive it after ten million births. When Mukunda heard this, he began to dance and cried, "Now, it is certain that I will attain the Lord after ten million births!" Śrīman Mahāprabhu received news of Mukunda's reaction, which revealed deep loving sentiments, and His heart melted. He called for Mukunda and bestowed His mercy upon him immediately. Mukunda Datta remained with Mahāprabhu during His *kīrtanas* in Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, during His *sannyāsa* initiation and during His stay in Nīlācala (Purī-dhāma).

Chatrabhoga

Chatrabhoga is situated four miles south of the Jayanagara-Majilapura railway station in Thānā Mathurāpura, Caubīsa-paraganā. During the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the Gaṅgā divided into hundreds of branches and merged into the ocean at Chatrabhoga. Mahāprabhu passed through here on His way to Purī. *Jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established Śrīman Mahāprabhu's foot-prints (*pāda-pīṭha*) here. Nearby is Cakra-tīrtha, and also the famous *tīrtha* called Ambūliṅga.

Chuṅchurā

In Pañcānana-talā, in the Kāmārapāḍā market of Chuṅchurā, is the deity of Śrī Śyāmasundara that used to be the family deity of



Śrī Śyāmasundara

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. When Muslims were causing a disturbance in Saptagrāma, Raghunātha dāsa's father Śrī Govardhana Majūmadāra hid Śrī Śyāmasundara here. The deity has resided here since that time.

Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja established Śrī Uddhāraṇa Gauḍīya Maṭha in an ancient *ṭhākura-bāḍī*[2] in Chuṅchurā's Caumāthā. The deities of Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda that were previously worshipped by Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita in Kumārahaṭṭa



Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's Gaura-Nityānanda deities

(Hālīśahara) were later brought to this *maṭha* in Chuṅchurā and are still being worshipped here.

Dāṅīhāṭa, or Dāīhāṭa

The village of Dāṅīhāṭa is situated two miles from Dāīhāṭa station on the Baiṇḍila-Baḍaharavā railway line. The *śrīpāṭa* of Śrī Mukunda Ghoṣa, Śrī Vāsudeva Ghoṣa's brother, is situated here. The deity worshipped by him, Śrī Rasika-rāya, is still

present here. This is also the place of Śrī Vaṁśī-vadanāndana's *śrīpāṭa*.

Śrī Vaṁśī-vadanānanda

In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* Śrī Vaṁśī-vadanānanda was the cherished flute (*vaṁśī*) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. His residence is also in Kuliyā-pahāḍapura in Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa. After Śrīman Mahāprabhu accepted the renounced order and left for Purī, Vaṁśī-vadanānanda was appointed guardian of Mother Śacī and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā-devī in Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa. He established a deity of Śrī Gaurāṅga on the approval of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā-devī.

Denuḍa

Denuḍa is the birthplace of Śrī Keśava Bhāratī, Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa-guru.* After Śrī Keśava Bhāratī accepted the renounced order he established *āśramas*, first in Khāṭundi and later in Kaṭavā, to perform his *bhajana.* His *samādhi* is also in Kaṭavā.

Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura composed *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* here and established deities of Śrī Nitāī-Gaura. Denuḍa was the home of his maternal uncle. Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita's handwritten *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself wrote the meanings of certain words, is safely preserved here to this day.

Devagrāma

Devagrāma lies in the Murśidābāda district in Thānā Sāgaradīghi and is the birthplace of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura was born in Devagrāma in 1576 of the Śaka Era (A.D. 1654). His father's name was Śrī

Rāma-nārāyaṇa Cakravartī. Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī received his primary education in Devagrāma and studied devotional scriptures in Saidābāda. His initiating spiritual master was Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa Cakravartī, and his grand-spiritual master (*parama-guru*) was Śrī Kṛṣṇa-caraṇa Cakravartī, Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa Cakravartī's father. Śrī Kṛṣṇa-caraṇa was the son of Śrī Rāma-kṛṣṇa Ācārya of Saidābāda, and the adopted son of Gaṅgā-nārāyaṇa of Bālūcara. Śrī Kṛṣṇa-caraṇa resided in Saidābāda, where he studied the *bhakti-śāstras* and later taught them to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. During this period Cakravartī Ṭhākura composed three small books – *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi-kiraṇa* and *Bhāgavatāmṛta-kaṇā*. Although Cakravartī Ṭhākura married, he had no attachment to household life. Renouncing his home he went to reside in Vṛndāvana to do *bhajana*. On the order of his spiritual master he returned to his virtuous wife, but spent only one night with her in which he spoke the nectarean words of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The next morning he returned to Vṛndāvana.



Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

In his time Cakravartī Ṭhākura was known in the assembly of scholars as *mahā-mahopādhyāya*, the most illustrious of great

teachers, and the helmsman and crest-jewel of the assembly of the Vaiṣṇavas. He was a profound scholar, a great philosopher, a superlative poet and an eminent devotee, expert in relishing *rasa*. He is called Viśvanātha because he shows the path of *bhakti* to the living entities of the universe (*viśva*), and he is called Cakravartī because he resides in the circle (*cakra*) of *bhakti*. It is said that rain would never fall where he sat to write his commentaries on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The deity established by him, Śrī Gokulānanda, is still present in Vṛndāvana. Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī left this world on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa on Māghī-śukla-pañcamī, the fifth day of the bright fortnight in the month of Māgha (January–February). His *samādhi* is near the Śrī Gokulānanda Temple in Vṛndāvana.

Some of his most prominent commentaries and books are: *Sārārtha-darśanī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Sārārtha-varṣiṇī* commentary on the *Gītā*, *Ānanda-candrika* commentary on *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, *Bhaktisāra-pradarśinī* commentary on *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Bhakti-harṣinī* commentary on *Gopāla-tāpanī*, commentary on *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *Mahatī* commentary on *Dāna-keli-kaumudī*, *Sukhavartanī* commentary on *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campu*, *Subodhinī* commentary on *Alaṅkāra-kaustubha*, commentary on *Haṁsadūta*, a Sanskrit commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, a commentary on *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta*, *Śrī Gaurāṅga-līlāmṛta*, *Aiśvarya-kādambinī*, *Mādhurya-kādambinī*, *Stavāmṛta-laharī*, *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi-kiraṇa*, *Bhāgavatāmṛta-kaṇā*, *Rāga-vartma-candrikā*, *Camatkāra-candrikā* and *Kṣaṇadā-gīta-cintāmaṇī*.

Ḍhākā (Śrī Ḍhākeśvarī Pīṭha)

Ḍhākā is where Śrī Vīracandra Prabhu met with the Nāvāb (the Muslim governor), and asked him for the beautifully carved stone piece situated on the top of the tower of his royal residence. The Nāvāb complied. From that stone he manifested a beautiful deity of Śrī Śyāmasundara. Vīracandra Prabhu preached *bhagavad-bhakti* in this region.

Ḍhākā-dakṣiṇa

Śrī Jagannātha Miśra, the father of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and his father, Śrī Upendra Miśra, were born here. Śrīman Mahāprabhu came here to meet with His paternal grandmother. This place is also known as Gupta, or hidden, Vṛndāvana.



Śrī Upendra Miśra's house

Dhārendā Bahādura

Dhārendā Bahādura is Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu's *śrīpāṭa*, and is situated in the Medinīpura district near the Khaḍagapura railway station. Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu took birth here in 1455 Śakābda (A.D. 1533).

Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu



Photo courtesy Śyāmasundara Temple, Vṛndāvana

Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu

Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu was born in the Sadagopa dynasty. His father's name was Śrī Kṛṣṇa Maṇḍala and his mother's name was Śrīmatī Durikā-devī. Many of his elder brothers and sisters died before he took birth. In an attempt to prevent him from also dying, his parents named him Duḥkhī (which means "sad" or "distressed"). Later his name became Kṛṣṇa dāsa, hence his childhood name was Duḥkhī Kṛṣṇa dāsa. When he was young, on the instruction of his father, he took Vaiṣṇava initiation from Śrī Hṛdaya Caitanya, a disciple of Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita from Ambikā-Kālanā. Śyāmānanda Prabhu first took *darśana* of Gauḍa-maṇḍala after which he travelled to all the holy places of India. He then studied the devotional scriptures under Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana, where he lived at Jhāḍū-maṇḍala and performed his *sādhana-bhajana*. One morning while sweeping the nearby Rāsa-maṇḍala, he found one of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's

anklets. He presented it to Jīva Gosvāmī, who forbade him to give it to anyone but Rādhikā Herself. Śrī Lalitā and Śrī Viśākhā came to Śyāmānanda Prabhu looking for the anklet, but he told them, "I will only return the anklet to its owner. If She comes here, I will place it around Her ankle with my own hands."

Lalitā answered, "Have you no shame? You are a *bābājī*, but you are prepared to place this anklet on the foot of a young, married lady!" Śyāmānanda Prabhu remained resolute. Finally it was decided that he could place the anklet on the foot of the owner if his eyes were blindfolded. This done, Śrīmatī Rādhikā appeared before him with Her *sakhīs*, and the life of Śyāmānanda Prabhu became successful. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was very pleased with him, and gave him the name "Śyāmānanda dāsa", which means "a servant of Śyāmasundara, who gives pleasure to Śyāmā (Rādhikā)". The anklet was touched to his forehead, leaving a *tilaka* mark in the shape of the anklet.

Śyāmānanda Prabhu travelled with Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya to Bengal, taking with them many volumes of Vaiṣṇava literature, which King Vīrahamvīra stole. [This pastime is related under "Vanaviṣṇupura" and "Yājīgrāma".]

In his final days Śyāmānanda Prabhu lived in Nṛsiṁhapura in Orissa and extensively preached Vaiṣṇava-dharma. Rasikānanda is prominent amongst his countless disciples.

Ekacakrā (Vīracandra-pura Garbhavāsa)

Ekacakrā is situated eight miles east of the Mallāpura railway station and eleven miles from the Rāmapura Hāṭa railway station.

One can take *darśana* of the following places in Ekacakrā:

(1) Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's place of birth, called the "Garbhavāsa".



Garbhavāsa

(2) The place where Nityānanda's mother, Padmāvatī, performed *ṣaṣṭhī-pūjā* [the ceremony performed six days after the birth of a son]. This is near the Garbhavāsa.

(3) Padmāvatī-puṣkariṇī, a pond that was constructed in memory of Mother Padmāvatī.



The place of Padmāvatī's *ṣaṣṭhī-pūjā*



Padmāvatī-puṣkariṇī



Mālātalā

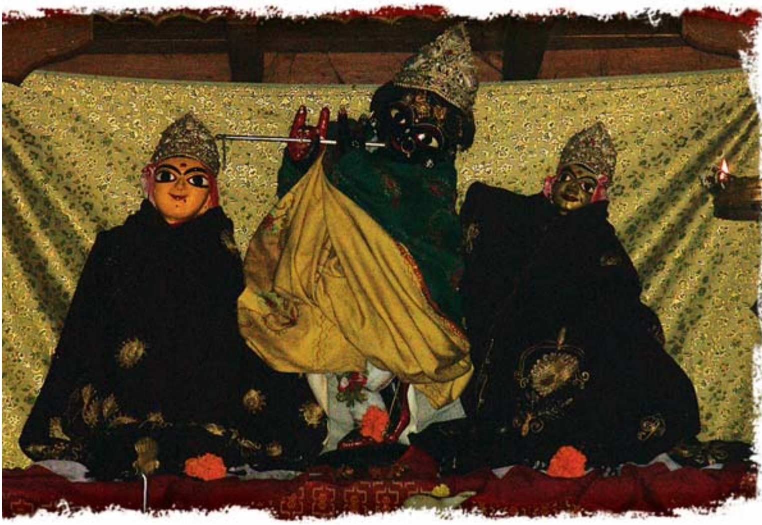
(4) Mālātalā, the gigantic *pīpala* tree on the branch of which Śrīman Mahāprabhu hung His garland (*mālā*).

(5) Siddha-bakula, a huge *bakula* tree under which Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu played in His childhood.

(6) Vīracandra-pura, which is named after Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's son, Śrī Vīracandra (also known as Śrī Vīrabhadra). Śrī Bāṅkā Rāya (or Śrī Baṅkima Rāya) with Śrī Jāhnavā-devī on His right and Śrīmatī Rādhikā on His left are worshipped in the temple here. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu found this deity of Śrī Bāṅkā Rāya at Kadamba-khaṇḍī-ghāṭa at the small river Yamunā, which flows nearby. The deity of Śrīmatī Rādhikā was found beneath the roots of a neem tree in Bhaḍḍāpura.



Siddha-bakula



Śrī Bāṅkā Rāya with Jāhnavā-devī on His right and Śrīmatī Rādhikā on His left

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu


Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu appeared in the village of Ekacakrā on Māghī-śukla-trayodaśī, in the year 1395 of the Śaka Era (A.D. 1473). His father was Śrī Haḍhāī Paṇḍita and His mother was Padmāvatī-devī.

In their childhood Śrī Nityānanda (Nitāī) and the other boys performed dramas based on the Supreme Lord's pastimes, such as *rāma-līlā* and *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. In the dramas depicting Rāma's pastimes Nitāī took the role of Lakṣmaṇa, and in the dramas of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes He would take the role of Balarāma. He completely absorbed Himself in His role. Once, He became so absorbed in the mood of Lakṣmaṇa fighting in Laṅkā that He actually became unconscious by the power of Meghanātha's blow to His chest. He remained in that condition for so long that the other boys tearfully went to inform His parents. When they saw their child unconscious they also started to cry. Then one boy said, "Nityānanda told me that when He faints, Hanumān should bring the *saṅjīvanī* medicinal plant from the Gandhamādana Mountain. When Nityānanda smells it He will regain consciousness." The boy playing the role of Hanumān enacted obtaining the *saṅjīvanī* plant and bringing it to Nitāī who, to everyone's amazement, quickly regained consciousness.

Once, when Nitāī was a child, a Vaiṣṇava came to Ekacakrā and asked Nitāī's father to allow him to take Nitāī with him on a pilgrimage to India's holy places. Later, Nityānanda Prabhu came to Vṛndāvana and from there went to Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa where He met Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He was Śrīman Mahāprabhu's "right hand" in propagating the holy name and distributing love of God. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* Nityānanda was Śrī Baladeva and before that, in Rāma's pastimes in Tretā-yuga, He was Lakṣmaṇa, Śrī Rāma's younger brother. Nityānanda Prabhu played a prominent role in the deliverance of Jagāī and Mādhāī. On Śrīman Mahāprabhu's order, He went daily throughout the town of Navadvīpa begging people to chant the holy name. He would become deeply absorbed in dancing and chanting with the devotees in Śrīvāsa-aṅgana, the place of *saṅkīrtana-rāsa*.

Nityānanda Prabhu was not conscious of His body to the extent that He sometimes wore cloth meant for the lower part of His body around His head, and quite naked became absorbed in cowgrazing and other pastimes related to *sakhya-bhāva*, or the mellow of friendship. Nityānanda Prabhu is one of the two main branches of the desire tree of *bhakti* [the Caitanya tree].

When Śrīman Mahāprabhu became a renunciant and went to Purī, Nityānanda Prabhu and some other devotees went with Him. On the bank of a river in Orissa, Nityānanda Prabhu broke Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa* staff (*daṇḍa*) into three pieces and threw them into the river. This river therefore became known as Daṇḍa-bhāṅgā, or "the place where the *daṇḍa* was broken". Mahāprabhu asked, "Why did You break My *daṇḍa*, My life-companion?" Nityānanda Prabhu answered, "I cannot tolerate seeing You carry this *daṇḍa* made of dry bamboo for the rest of Your life." The hidden meaning behind these words is that the *ekadaṇḍa* (single staff) indicates impersonalism in which one

thinks, "I am Brahman." Nityānanda Prabhu turned Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *ekadaṇḍa* into the *tridaṇḍa* carried by Vaiṣṇavas.

Prior to Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā, Nityānanda Prabhu was Śrīman Mahāprabhu's most prominent assistant. Mahāprabhu eventually ordered Him to propagate devotional service to the Supreme Lord, especially *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, all over Bengal. Nityānanda Prabhu therefore returned to live in Navadvīpa and after some time married the two daughters of Sūryadāsa Sarakhela, Śrī Vasudhā and Śrī Jāhnavā. After His marriage He lived in Khaḍadaha, where His son, Śrī Vīracandra, took birth.

Nityānanda Prabhu is Mula-saṅkarṣaṇa. He manifests in five forms: Mahā-saṅkarṣaṇa, Kāraṇābdhiśāyī Viṣṇu, Garbhodaśāyī Viṣṇu, Kṣīrodaśāyī Viṣṇu and Śeṣa. He is the presiding deity (*adhiṣṭhātrī-deva*) of the *sandhinī-śakti*, the potency of eternal existence. He serves the Youthful Couple as the *sakhī* Anaṅga Mañjarī.

After Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu entered His unmanifest pastimes, Jāhnavā-devī and Vīracandra Prabhu came to Ekacakrā. Memories of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu awakened within them and they wept tears of bliss. In the course of time, the village of Ekacakrā became deserted, but now the population is growing again.

Gopīvallabhapura

Gopīvallabhapura is situated in the Medinīpura district on the bank of the Suvarṇa-rekhā River.

Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu, a disciple of Śrī Śyāmananda Prabhu, received a deity from the King of Mayura-bhañjana. Śrī Śyāmananda Prabhu named the deity Śrī Gopīnātha, and the

place where he established this deity became known as Gopīvallabhpura. Many articles have been preserved in the house of the late *mahanta*, Śrī Nandanandānanda-deva Gosvāmī, including stamped royal agreements and Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu's neck beads, his patchwork garment, his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, clay pots, *tilaka*, three or four of his flutes and many of his handwritten books.

Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu

Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu is also called Rasika Murārī, and was Śyāmānanda Prabhu's most prominent disciple. He appeared in 1512 in the Śaka Era (A.D. 1590) in the village of Rohiṇī, or Rayaṇī, which is situated on the bank of the Suvarṇa-rekhā River. His father's name was Śrī Acyutānanda and his mother's name was Śrī Bhavānī-devī. Śrī Rasikānanda was erudite, *rasika* and a perfected great soul (*siddha-mahātmā*). Śrī Śyāmananda Prabhu was captivated by Rasikānanda Prabhu's qualities, and entrusted him with the service of Śrī Govinda, a deity established by Śrī Śyāmananda.



Photo courtesy Śyāmasundara Temple, Vṛndāvana

Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu

Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu was a powerful personality. Once a despotic Muslim ruler released some wild elephants to cause him trouble. Chanting the Lord's name he took some water in his palms and threw it upon the elephants. The mere touch of

this water made the elephants turn their heads, lift their trunks and loudly chant Kṛṣṇa's holy names. At that moment the elephants became Vaiṣṇavas, adopting humble and mild behaviour. The heart of the despotic ruler changed, and after surrendering to Śrī Rasikānanda he became a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

Rulers of contemporary kingdoms, such as Mayūra-bhañjana, Paṭāśapura and Mayanā, became disciples of Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu due to his transcendental potency. In his final days he performed *kīrtana* with his disciples as they walked from Vāṅśadaha village to Remunā. When they arrived in the courtyard of the Khīracorā-Gopīnātha Temple, Śrī Rasikānanda went into the inner chamber of the temple and entered Śrī Gopīnātha's body. All his associates present also gave up their bodies, right there in the courtyard. Śrī Rasikānanda's *puṣpa-samādhi* and the *samādhis* of the other devotees are near the temple of Śrī Khīracorā-Gopīnātha.

Guptipāḍa

Śrī Vakreśvara Paṇḍita's residence is in Guptipāḍa. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu entrusted Śrī Vakreśvara with the responsibility of serving in the Śrī Rādhā-kānta Maṭha and the Gambhīrā, which is situated in Śrī Kāśī Miśra-bhavana in Purī-dhāma.

Jhāmaṭapura

Jhāmaṭapura is situated in the Vardhamāna district, near the Sālāra station (on the Eastern Railway line). Within it are the residences of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, who used to live here with his elder brother, and Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa, a great devotee of Lord Nityānanda.

Once, while they were glorifying Śrīman Mahāprabhu in *kīrtana*, Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa came to their house. When



Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's *bhajana-kuṭī*

Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa began glorifying Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's elder brother interjected with some disrespectful comments about Him. Angered, Śrī Mīnaketana Rāmadāsa left that place. Śrī Kavirāja Gosvāmī became so enraged with his brother that he set out for Vṛndāvana, and thus abandoned his brother forever. Upon seeing Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's firm faith in Him, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu showed unfathomable mercy by giving him direct *darśana* of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha and Śrī Rādhā-Mohana. This pastime took place here in Jhāmaṭapura. Nityānanda Prabhu also bestowed *prema-bhakti* upon Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja and empowered him to compose literature on devotional service.

Kāgaja Pukuriyā

Kāgaja Pukuriyā is situated in the Yaśohara district, east of Benāpola. The immoral and vicious Rāmacandra Khān, who maintained connections with prostitutes, used to live here. He once engaged a young, charming prostitute named Lakṣahīrā to disturb Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's *sādhana*, but upon hearing Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's pure chanting she gave up her former ways and became a great Vaiṣṇavī. Even several exalted male saints and *sādhus* would come to take her *darśana*.

Later, when Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu came to this village, Rāmacandra Khān showed him disrespect. Nityānanda Prabhu immediately left. Due to this offence, Muslims attacked the village the next day, killing Rāmacandra Khān and his family, and desecrating the place.

Kājalīgrāma

Kājalīgrāma is situated in the Vardhamāna district and is the birthplace of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's mother, Śrīmatī Padmāvatī. She was a highly learned and deeply pious woman. Her father's name was Śrī Maheśvara Śarmā.

Kālikāpura

Kālikāpura is situated in the Vardhamāna district near Kācoyāra. At Kālikāpura the deities of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, who were established by Śrī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāminī's descendants, are worshipped.

Kāñcaḍāpāḍā, or Kāñcanapallī

Kāñcanapallī, the residence of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associate Śrī Vāsudeva Datta, is situated on the bank of the Gaṅgā in the Caubīsa-paraganā district. Like his brother Śrī Mukunda Datta,

Śrī Vāsudeva Datta was an expert singer in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's congregational chanting party. He once asked the following boon from Śrīman Mahāprabhu: "I will accept the sins of all the living entities in the universe if You kindly remove their attachment to material life and engage them in worshipping You." He later left Kāñcaḍāpāḍā and became a resident of Nīlācala. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes he was Madhuvrata Sakhā.

Śivānanda Sena was born in Kulīna-grāma and his father-in-law's house was in Kāñcaḍāpāḍā.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa-rāya, a deity established by Śrī Kavi-karṇapūra, is worshipped in the Kṛṣṇapura section of Kāñcaḍāpāḍā.

Kāñcana-gaḍiyā

Kāñcana-gaḍiyā is situated about five miles from Bājārasāhu station, in the Kāṅdi subdivision of the Murśidābād district. One can take *darśana* of the following places in Kāñcana-gaḍiyā:

(1) the residence of Śrī Haridāsa Ācārya (also known as Dvija Haridāsa), an associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Haridāsa Ācārya resided and performed *bhajana* in Vṛndāvana according to Mahāprabhu's instructions. He had two sons, Śrīdāsa and Gokuladāsa. When Haridāsa Ācārya went to Vṛndāvana, they remained in Kāñcana-gaḍiyā. Haridāsa Ācārya requested Śrīnivāsa Ācārya to give them Vaiṣṇava initiation which he did when he returned from Vṛndāvana. Haridāsa Ācārya departed from this world in Vṛndāvana, and his sons brought his body to Kāñcana-gaḍiyā where they placed him in *samādhi*.

(2) the residence of Śrī Rādhā-vallabha dāsa Maṇḍala, who translated *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*.

(3) the residence of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's disciple, Śrī Vṛndāvana Caṭṭarāja.
(4) the residence of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's disciple, Nṛsiṁha Kavirāja, one of the eight poets (*aṣṭa-kavirājas*).
(5) the residence of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's disciple Śrī Raghunātha Kara, also one of the eight poets.

Kāñcanā-grāma

Kāñcanā-grāma in Caṭṭagrāma is the birthplace of the brothers Śrī Vāsudeva and Mukunda Datta, as well as other associates of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu asked Śrī Śivānanda Sena to look after Śrī Vāsudeva Datta's property. Śrī Vāsudeva Datta, who was Madhuvrata Sakhā in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, was a sweet and skillful singer.

Kāṅkuṭiyā

In Kāṅkuṭiyā, which is situated near Deulira village in the Vīrabhūma district, is the house of Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura's father-in-law. The deities established by him, Śrī Gopīnātha and Śrī Gaura-Nitāī, are still worshipped here.

Kāśima-bāzāra

In Kāśima-bāzāra is the royal palace of Mahārāja Śrī Manīndracandra Nandī, who offered his life, treasury and everything in his possession to the progress of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-dharma. To his great credit he financed printing of a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that had several commentaries. In many ways, he helped Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda preach Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-dharma both in India and abroad.

Kaṭavā

Kaṭavā is situated in the Vardhamāna district, and is also called Kaṇṭaka-nagarī. At the age of twenty-four, Śrī Nimāī Paṇḍita left His wife Viṣṇupriyā and His mother Śacī-devī, crossed the Gaṅgā at Nidayā-ghāṭa and came to this place, where He accepted *sannyāsa* from Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. From here He went to Purī via Śāntīpura. A temple of Śrīman Mahāprabhu still stands here.



The temple and deities at Kaṭavā

The place where Śrīman Mahāprabhu's head was shaved for his *sannyāsa* ceremony, a *samādhi* of His hair, Śrī Gadādhara dāsa's *samādhi* and residence, the residence of Śrī Keśava Bhāratī, and the *samādhi* of Śrī Madhu, the barber who shaved Mahāprabhu, are also here.

Our spiritual master, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, also accepted the renounced order here.



The place where Śrīman Mahāprabhu's head was shaved for his *sannyāsa* ceremony



The *samādhi* of Śrī Gadādhara dāsa and Mahāprabhu's hair (left photo) and the *samādhi* of the barber who shaved Mahāprabhu (right corner of right photo)

Kendubilva

Kendubilva is situated in the Vīrabhūma district on River Ajaya's bank, twenty miles south of Siuḍī. The illustrious poet and the author of *Gīta-govinda*, Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī, took birth here. For sometime he was the royal *paṇḍita* of Mahārāja Lakṣmaṇa Sena.

Keśīyāḍī

Keśīyāḍī, situated in the Medinīpura district, has been purified by the touch of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu's and Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu's lotus feet. There is also a *gauḍīya-maṭha* here.

Khaḍadaha

Khaḍadaha village is situated on the Gaṅgā's bank, two miles west of Khaḍadaha railway station on the Eastern Railway line in the Caubīsa-paraganā district. When Śrīman Mahāprabhu

went to Purī, Nityānanda Prabhu returned to Bengal to preach Vaiṣṇava-dharma in various places on Mahāprabhu's order. After some time, He married Śrī Jāhnavā-devī and Śrī Vasudhā-devī and came to live in Khaḍadaha. His son, Śrī Vīrabhadra (Vīracandra), and his daughter, Gaṅgāmātā-devī, took birth here. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Narottama Ṭhākura also visited this place. A deity of Śrī Śyāmasundara Rāyā presides in the local temple. The *ghāṭa* at the Gaṅgā is known as Śyāmasundara-ghāṭa.



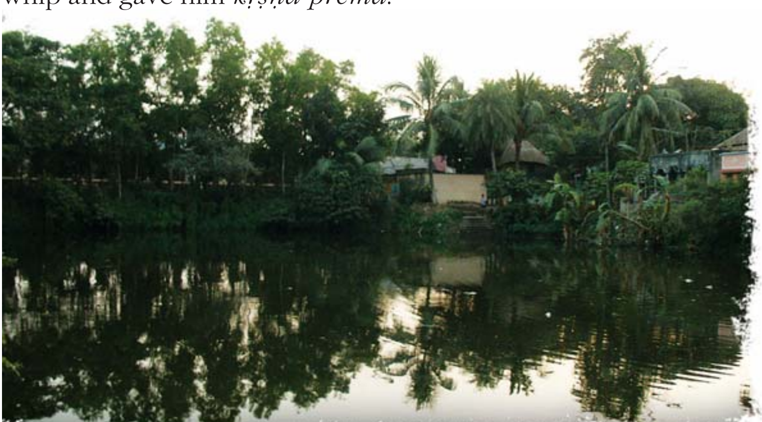
Photo courtesy the local temple in Khaḍadaha

Śrī Śyāmasundara Rāyā

Khānākula-kṛṣṇa-nagara

Khānākula is situated on the bank of the river Dvārakeśvara in the Huglī district, and is the residence of Śrī Abhirāma Gosvāmī. He was prominent among the twelve *gopālas*, or cowherd boyfriends, in the branch of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he was Śrīdāma Sakhā and in *rāma-līlā* he was Bharata. His wife's name was Mālinī-devī. In the mood of Śrīdāma he once lifted with one hand a mighty wooden log that sixteen people together had been unable to lift. Abhirāma Gosvāmī held it up like a flute. He was so powerful that when he offered his obeisances to any deity other than a Viṣṇu deity, or to an ordinary stone, it would crack. Furthermore, when he paid obeisances to seven of Nityānanda Prabhu's sons they all died, but when He paid obeisances to Śrī Vīracandra Prabhu, the eighth son, he remained alive. Abhirāma Gosvāmī considered Vīracandra Prabhu to be Śrīman Mahāprabhu's second body.

Abhirāma Gosvāmī carried a whip called "Jaya-maṅgala". Any fortunate person who was touched by this whip received love of God. Śrī Abhirāma Gosvāmī struck Śrīnivāsa Ācārya with this whip and gave him *kṛṣṇa-prema*.



Abhirāma-kuṇḍa



The Gopīnātha Temple in Khānākula



Abhirāma Gosvāmī's Gopīnātha deity



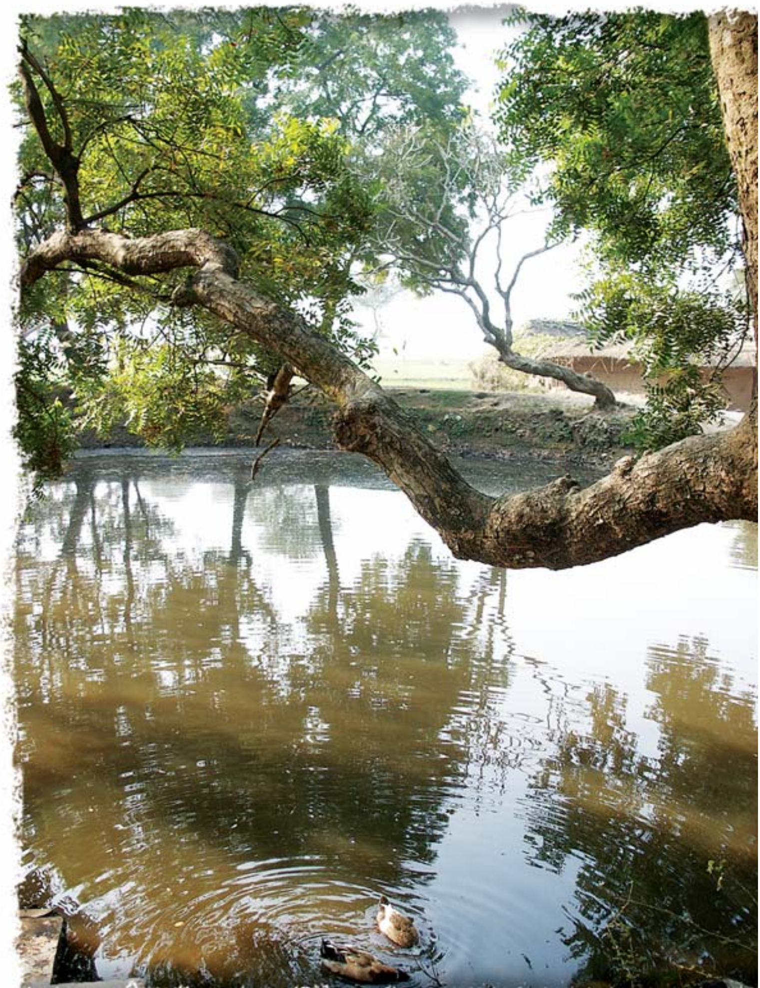
Narottama Ṭhākura's sitting-place

Kheturī

Kheturī, the birthplace of Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, is situated in the Rājaśāhī district (Bangladesh) near Rājabari Hāṭa.

The places of *darśana* in Kheturī-dhāma are:

(1) Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's sitting-place (the *āsana-bāḍī*),



Rādhā-kuṇḍa

(2) Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa established by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura,

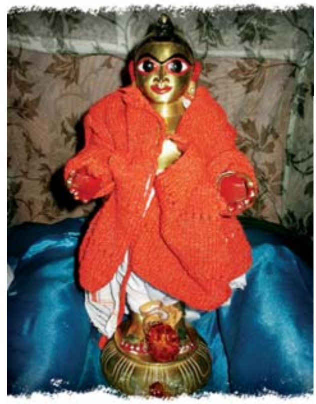
(3) Āmlītalā (or Imlītalā), where Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura put his tooth stick in the earth and a massive tamarind (*imlī*) tree grew,



(clockwise from top:)
Narottama Ṭhākura's place of *bhajana*,
the river Padma at Prematalī and Āmlītalā

(4) Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's place of *bhajana*,

(5) Prematalī. Before Śrī Narottama's birth, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came here and deposited *prema* for him in the Padma River. This place, on the bank of the Padma, therefore became known as Prematalī. It is two miles from Kheturī.



Śrī Gaurāṅga in Jiagañja

At the famous Kheturī-mahotsava, Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura established six deities: (1) Śrī Gaurāṅga, (2) Śrī Vallabhī-kānta, (3) Śrī Vraja-mohana, (4) Śrī Kṛṣṇa, (5) Śrī Rādhā-kānta and (6) Śrī Rādhā-mohana. These deities are no longer present here. Śrī Gaurāṅga is presently worshipped in Jiagañja (in the Murśidābada district) in West Bengal. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's consort, Śrī Jāhnavā-devī, participated in this grand festival along with uncountable Vaiṣṇavas from all over Bengal.

Kogrāma

Kogrāma, situated in the Vardhāmana district, south of Śrīkhaṇḍa. It is the residence of Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, and his *samādhi* is also here. His mother's name was Sadānandī and his father was Kamalākara. He was a disciple of the celebrated Śrī Narahari Sarkāra Ṭhākura of Śrīkhaṇḍa. Locana dāsa Ṭhākura composed a collection of songs and translated the verses of *Rāsa-pañcādhyāyī*, the five chapters in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā*.

Kolkata Bāgabāzāra

The King of Viṣṇupura, Vīrahamvīra, used to serve Śrī Madana-mohana. This deity was originally served by the descendants of Śrī Kāśīśvara Paṇḍita, and King Vīrahamvīra received the deity from them. One of Vīrahamvīra's descendants mortgaged Śrī Madana-mohana for 100,000 rupees with Śrī Gokulacandra Mitra, a

rich landowner residing in Bāgabāzāra. For this they even had a courtcase. To this day, Śrī Madana-mohana is present in Bāgabāzāra in Gokulacandra Mitra-bhavana.

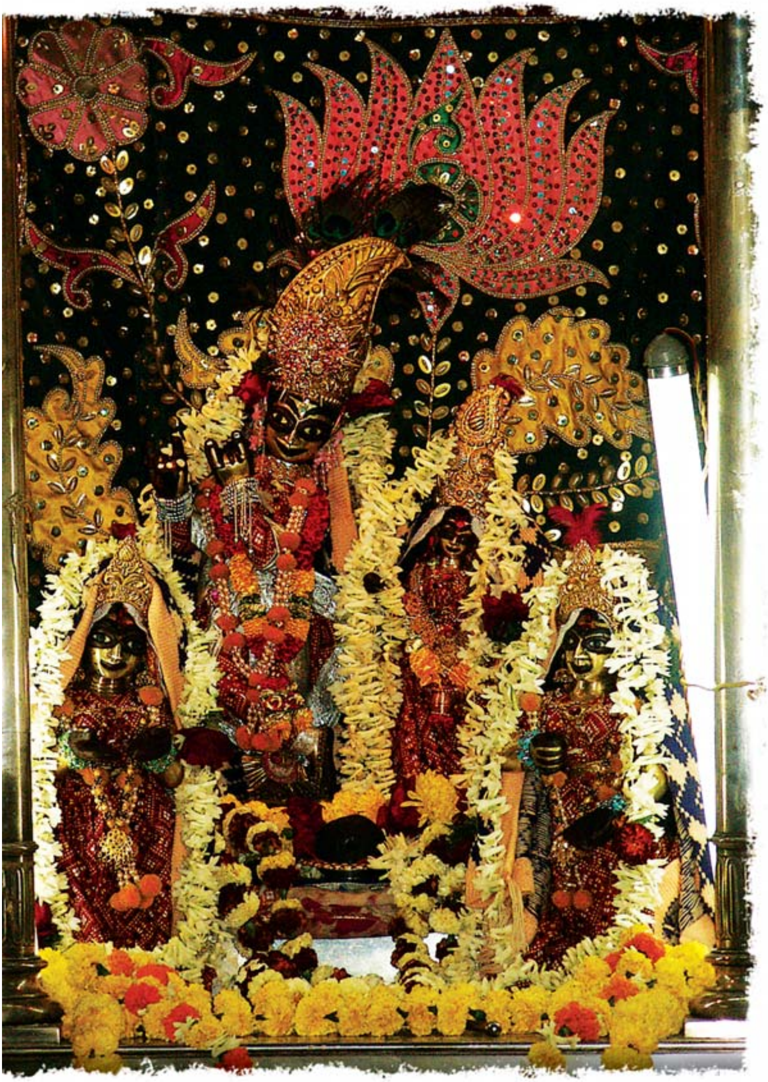
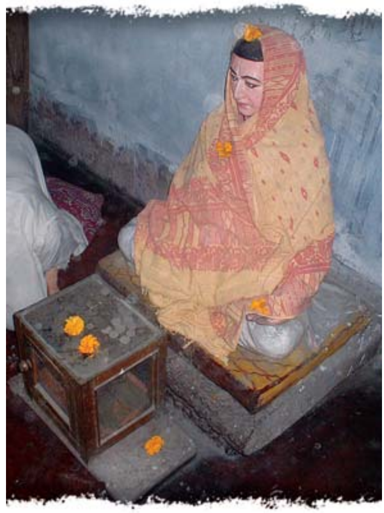


Photo courtesy Gokulacandra Mitra-bhavana, Kolkata

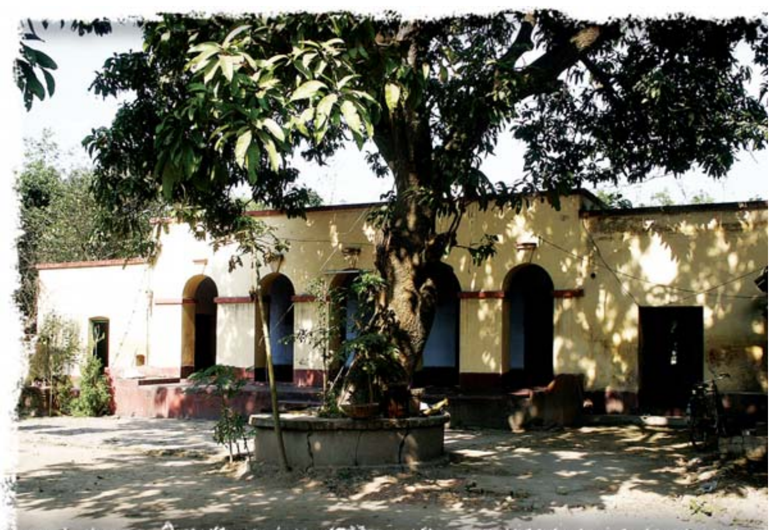
Śrī Madana-mohana at Gokulacandra Mitra-bhavana

Kṛṣṇapura

Kṛṣṇapura (one of the villages of Saptagrāma) is the appearance-place of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. The palace of his father, Śrī Govardhana dāsa, and uncle, Śrī Hiraṇya dāsa, was here. Kṛṣṇapura is situated in the Huglī district, a short distance south of Saptagrāma village on the eastern bank of the Sarasvatī River, which is now almost dry. In the temple here is a pair of wooden shoes worn by Raghunātha dāsa and a stone slab he used as a seat.



A deity of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī sitting on the original stone slab (the box contains his shoes)



The appearance-place of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

Kulāī, or Kānuī-grāma

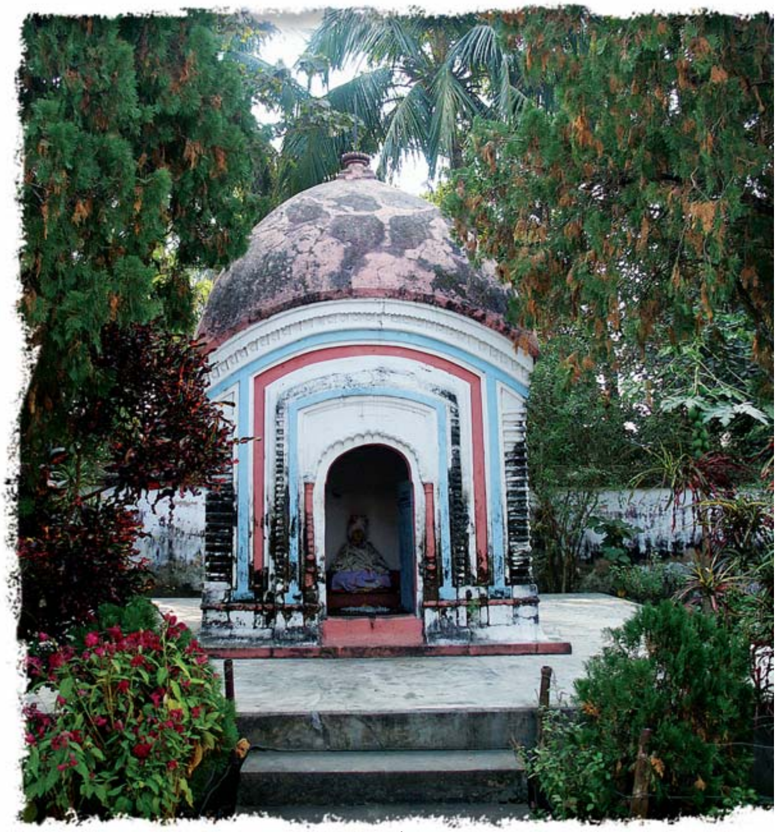
The village of Kulāī is situated in the Vardhamāna district on the bank of the River Ajaya, ten miles north-west of Kaṭavā. It is the birthplace of three of Śrī Mahāprabhu's associates – Śrī Govinda, Śrī Mādhava and Śrī Vāsudeva. Śrīman Mahāprabhu rested on the bank of this river.

Kulīna-grāma

Kulīna-grāma is situated in the Vardhamāna district, three miles east of Jaugrāma railway station on the Eastern Railway's Newcord line. This was the residential place of many of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates, such as Śrī Satyarāja Khān, Śrī Rāmānanda Vasu, Śaṅkara, Vidyānanda and Vāṇīnātha Vasu. Among the places of *darśana* here are the Śrī Jagannātha Temple, Śrī Madana-gopāla Temple, a temple of Gopīśvara Śiva (worshipped by Satyarāja Khān), Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura's place of *bhajana* and a memorial *stambha* dedicated to Satyarāja Khān and the other famous residents of Kulīna-grāma.



Gopīśvara worshipped by Satyarāja Khān (left) and Śrī Madana-gopāla (right)



Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura's place of *bhajana*

Śrī Rāmānanda Vasu

Śrī Rāmānanda Vasu was extremely dear to Śrīman Mahāprabhu. His father's real name was Śrī Lakṣmīnātha Vasu, but his title was Śrī Satyarāja Khān. The name of Śrī Satyarāja Khān's father was Śrī Mālādhara Vasu and his title was Śrī Guṇarāja Khān, a renowned poet. Śrīman Mahāprabhu recited a line from his famous book, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-vijaya*: *"nanda-nandana kṛṣṇa mora prāṇa-nātha* – Nanda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of my life." Mahāprabhu then said, "By this statement of Guṇarāja I'm sold into the hands of his dynasty."

Śrī Rāmānanda Vasu and his father, Śrī Satyarāja Khān, both met Śrīman Mahāprabhu at the time of Ratha-yātrā. Their meeting is described in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Every year on the order of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, they used to bring silk ropes that they had made themselves. This rope was used to move Śrī Jagannātha on to His chariot at the time of the Ratha-yātrā. In answering a series of questions put to Him by Śrī Rāmānanda Vasu and Śrī Satyarāja Khān, Mahāprabhu said, "One whose mouth has once uttered the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is a third-class Vaiṣṇava and is worshipful. He whose mouth constantly utters *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is a higher Vaiṣṇava, a second-class Vaiṣṇava. And he whose *darśana* causes one automatically chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is a first-class Vaiṣṇava."

Kumārahaṭṭa

Kumārahaṭṭa is situated in the Caubīsa-paraganā district. Śrī Īśvara Purī, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and Khañja Bhagavānācārya used to

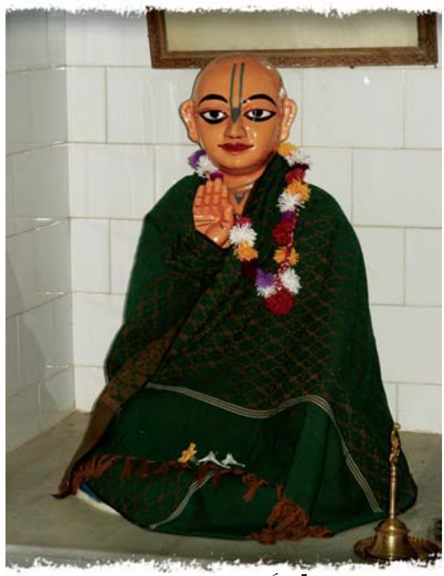


Kumārahaṭṭa, the birthplace of Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda

reside here. Its present name is Hālīśahara. Previously Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita lived in Navadvīpa, but after Śrīman Mahāprabhu entered *aprakaṭa-līlā*, he was unable to tolerate separation from Him and moved here.

Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda

Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda, the most prominent disciple of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, had firm faith in his *guru*. He spent most of his time residing at his *guru's āśrama* in Gayā. Caitanya Mahāprabhu met him in the Viṣṇu Temple in Gayā, and accepted Vaiṣṇava initiation from him. He was a *bhāvuka bhakta* and an extraordinary poet, authoring the famous *Kṛṣṇa-līlāmṛta*.



Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda

While Īśvara Purī was in Navadvīpa-dhāma, he asked Nimāī Paṇḍita to correct this book. This event took place before Nimāī's *dīkṣā*.

After accepting the renounced order of life, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Kumārahaṭṭa, the birthplace of his *guru*, where He reverentially took some dust and placed it on His head. As Śrī Īśvara Purī was leaving this world, he ordered Govinda and Kāśīśvara to go to Purī and serve Mahāprabhu there.



Śrī Mādhāī's *samādhi*

Mādhāī-talā

Mādhāī-talā is situated one mile from Mahāprabhu's temple in Kaṭavā. The *samādhi* of Śrī Mādhāī, of the famous brothers Jagāī and Mādhāī, is here.

Maheśa

Maheśa is also called Śrī Rāmapura-Maheśa. It is the residence of two of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates, Śrī Kamalākara Pillāī and Dhruvānanda Brahmacārī. Kamalākara Pillāī's daughter, Śrī Nārāyaṇī-devī, was married to Śrī Vīracandra Prabhu. The Ratha-yātrā festival that takes place here is renowned.



Photo courtesy the temple in Maheśa

Śrī Kamalākara Pillāī's deities

Mekhalā

Mekhalā is the place of residence of Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, an associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. It is situated twelve miles north of Caṭṭagrāma village. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu considered Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi to be Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja and used to address him as "Father". Although he lived like a king, upon hearing a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* he fell from his bed and began to cry, calling out, "O Kṛṣṇa! O Kṛṣṇa!" On Śrīman Mahāprabhu's recommendation, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita took initiation from him.

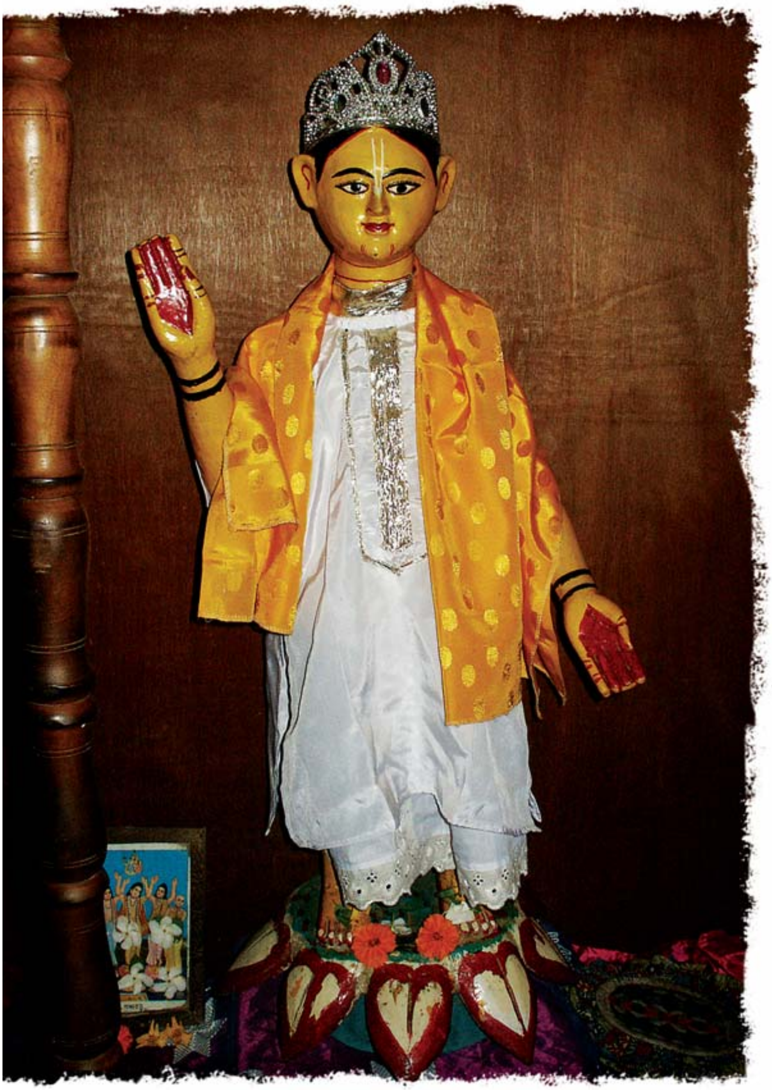
Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi was a disciple of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī. He would never go to the Gaṅgā to take bath during the day because at that time people would wash the dirt from their bodies in her waters, as well as wash their clothes, rinse their mouths and so forth. This made him greatly unhappy. For this reason, he would go to the bank of the Gaṅgā at night, pay his obeisances and perform *ācamana*. He never placed his feet in the Gaṅgā. [Also see "Cāṭigrāma".]



The area of Lāuḍa Navagrāma

Navagrāma

Lāuḍa Navagrāma in the Śrīhaṭṭa district is Śrī Advaita Ācārya's birthplace. [See "Śāntipura".]



A deity of Śrī Advaita Ācārya as worshipped in present-day Navagrāma

Navahaṭṭa, or Naihāṭī

Navahaṭṭa village is situated three miles north of Kaṭavā, and is the home of Śrī Sarvānanda Vācaspati, whose knowledge of the Purāṇas was unequalled. Śrī Sarvānanda Vācaspati was Sanātana Gosvāmī's teacher in Sanskrit. Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana's ancestor, Śrī Padmanābha, lived in Navahaṭṭa and worshipped Śrī Jagannātha by performing Ratha-yātrā and other services. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī's father, Śrī Kumāradeva, left this place due to family troubles and went to Vāklācandradvīpa.

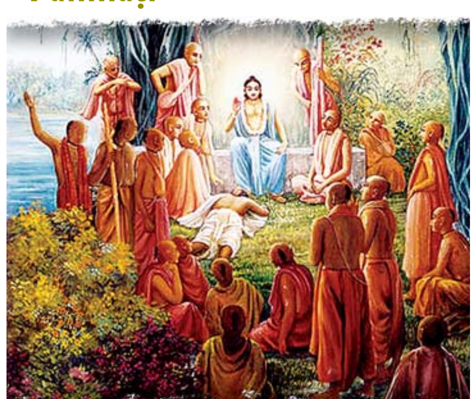
Nityānandapura

This place lies within Saptagrāma in the Huglī district. After Nityānanda Prabhu's marriage with Śrī Vasudhā and Śrī Jāhnavā-devī they resided here for some time.

Pañcakuṭī

This village, which is situated within the Bāṅkuḍā district, is near Vanaviṣṇupura where dacoits stole the bullock cart filled with scriptures from Śrīnivāsa Ācārya.

Pānīhāṭī



Pānīhāṭī is situated on Gaṅgā's bank in the Caubīsa-paraganā district and is where Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, on the order of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, observed the *ciḍā-dahī-daṇḍa-mahotsava*, a festival



The banyan tree on the bank of the Gaṅgā

in which the Vaiṣṇavas were served delicious chipped rice preparations.

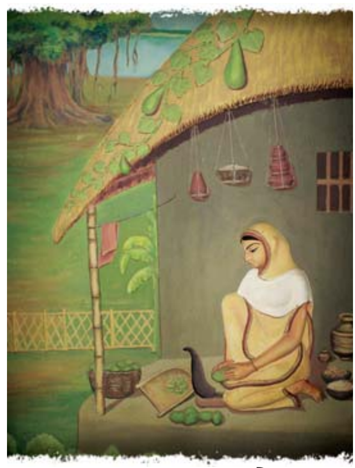
Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu used to sit under a banyan tree on the bank of the Gaṅgā, and the same tree is still here today. Nearby, under a bower of *mālatī* and *mādhavī* creepers, is the residence of Śrī Rāghava Paṇḍita. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* gives a beautiful description of Rāghava's bags filled with foodstuffs that his sister Damayantī had cooked for Śrīman Mahāprabhu. It also describes Damayantī's inclination to serve.



Śrī Rāghava Paṇḍita's *samādhi*

Śrī Rāghava Paṇḍita

Śrī Rāghava Paṇḍita is one of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's main associates. In *vraja-līlā* he was Dhaniṣṭhā. *Kadamba* flowers used to bloom on the *jambīra-nībū* tree next to his house and from them he would make garlands for his deity. His sister, Damayantī, used to spend many days painstakingly preparing a variety of tasty dried foodstuffs for him to take to Śrīman Mahāprabhu in Śrī Purī-dhāma at the time of Ratha-yātrā. Throughout the year, Govinda would daily offer these preparations to Mahāprabhu in small quantities. From time to time, Rāghava Paṇḍita himself, who was very dear to all of Mahāprabhu's devotees, cooked for Śrīman Mahāprabhu.



Damayantī



Rāghava Paṇḍita carries the foodstuffs prepared by Damayantī to Purī.

Paścimapāḍā

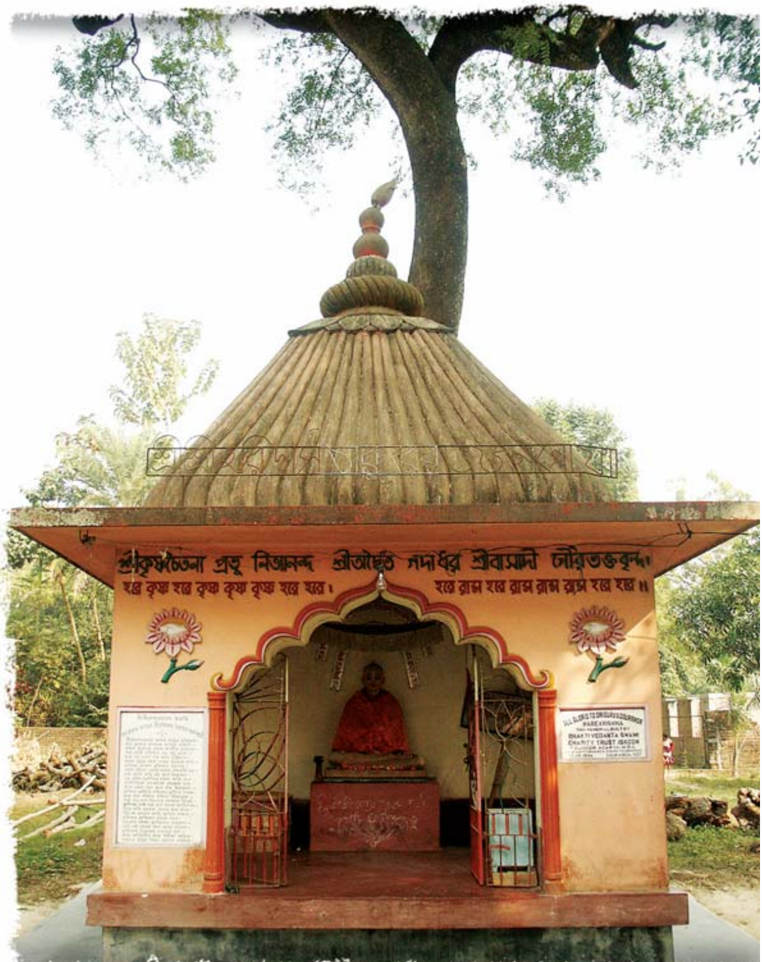
The village of Paścimapāḍā is situated west of Telīyā Budhurī, and is the residential place of Śrī Govinda Kavirāja, who is in the Nityānanda branch of the Caitanya tree. He was Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's disciple and Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja's younger brother. His father was Śrī Cirañjīva Sena and his wife was Mahāmāyā-devī. Govinda Kavirāja was a Śākta, a worshipper of Durgā-devī, but by the mercy of his brother and mother, he later took initiation into Vaiṣṇava-dharma. Once, when he was ill, he went with his brother to Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and accepted initiation from him. After his initiation he became free from that disease and composed his first song, *bhajahuṅ re mana śrī-nanda-nandana abhaya-caraṇāravinda re*. He not only became free from his bodily disease, but from material conditioning as well. Thereafter he composed many devotional songs that later became famous. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was so impressed by his extraordinary poetic talent that he gave him the title "Kavirāja", "he who is pre-eminent among poets". Śrī Vīracandra Gosvāmī also praised his poetry.

The following lines of Bengali poetry, full of beautiful alliteration, are an example of his work. They wonderfully describe the blackish *añjana* on Kṛṣṇa's eyes, His *śyāma*-complexioned hue that resembles a cloud, His hair decorated with *mallī* flowers, His sweetness sweeter than honey and His garland of *mālati* flowers. It also describes Kṛṣṇa to be as cool as the moon and His body as fragrant as a flower.

añjana gañjana jagajana rañjana, jalada puñja jini varaṇā
mukalita mallī, madhura madhu-mādhurī mālati mañjulamāla
kuvalaya kandala kusumākalevara kālima-kānti kalola

Phuliyā

Phuliyā is one of the places where Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura resided. It is situated near the Gaṅgā in the Nadīyā district, just south of Śāntipura. Inside a cave here, Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura used to chant the holy name 300,000 times each day. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu also came here after taking *sannyāsa*.



This shrine marks the location of Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's cave.

Pichaladā

In the Medinīpura district, fourteen miles from the city of Tamaluka, there is a place called Naraghāṭa. Crossing the River Haldī at Naraghāṭa, one will find the small village of Pichaladā nearby. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu first journeyed from Jagannātha Purī to Vṛndāvana by the ocean route, He came to this place. From here He travelled by boat to Pānīhāṭī. Nowadays there is a *maṭha* here, "Pādapīṭha" Pichaladā Gauḍīya Maṭha, established by Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti.

Pūrvasthalī

Pūrvasthalī is situated in the western part of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. Its old name was Śaṅkarapura.

Puṭiyā

The king of Puṭiyā, Śrī Vīrendra Nārāyaṇa, was initiated into Vaiṣṇava-dharma by the mercy of Vaiṣṇavas who had been inspired by the descendants of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu.

Śrī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāminī

Śrī Śacī-devī, a daughter of one of Puṭiyā's kings, accepted initiation from Śrī Haridāsa Gosvāmī, who was a great Vaiṣṇava and *pujārī* of Śrī Govindadeva in Vṛndāvana. Śrī Śacī-devī lived in Vṛndāvana on the order of her spiritual master and performed strict *sādhana-bhajana* at Rādhā-kuṇḍa for some years. She later performed *bhajana* in a hut at the ruins of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya's house in Jagannātha Purī. To fulfil the order of her spiritual master she desired to construct a beautiful temple there in memory of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya.

Once, on Gaṅgā-daśharā (the day Gaṅgā appeared in this world), Śacī-devī desired to take bath in the Gaṅgā. That night the Gaṅgā flowed from Śrī Jagannāthadeva's lotus feet to her *āśrama*. Upon entering the waters of the Gaṅgā to take bath, the current carried her to Śrī Jagannātha's feet in the temple. In the morning when the *pujārīs* opened the temple doors they saw Śrī Śacī-devī, and taking her to be a thief, put her in jail. Jagannātha came to the king and the head *pujārī* in a dream and ordered them: "Show Śacī-devī great respect and honour. Take her back to her own place and accept initiation from her. Build a beautiful temple there according to her desire, and then make all arrangements for worship in that temple." This miracle astonished everyone and they became her disciples. From then on she became known as Śrī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāminī.

The deity of Śrī Śyāma-rāya of Jaipur ordered His *brāhmaṇa pujārī* to personally carry Him to Śrī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāminī in Śrī Purī-dhāma. In Purī, Śrī Śyāma-rāya accepted personal service from her. On her order, the Mahārāja of Purī renovated the house of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya in such a way that it was again a magnificent royal palace just as people remembered it to be. To this day Śrī Śyāma-rāya is being worshipped there.

Rāmakeli

Rāmakeli is situated in the Māladaha district and used to be the capital of the land of Gauḍa. Here Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana held the posts of Emperor Hussein Shah's ministers. It is also the birthplace of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī. In the northern part of Rāmakeli is Sanātana-dīghi, and on the western bank of Sanātana-dīghi was their place of residence. There is a large pond named Rūpa-sāgara here, which was constructed by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, whose residence was on the eastern side. Even today a *tamāla*



Sanātana-dīghi

and *keli-kadamba* tree grow where Śrīman Mahāprabhu sat as He was about to leave for Vṛndāvana. The magnificent temple of Śrī Madana-mohana, established by Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, is still a place of *darśana*. In memory of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmīs manifested Śyāma-kuṇḍa and Rādhā-kuṇḍa, which are nearby. They also manifested Lalitā-, Viśākhā-, Indulekhā-, Sudevī- and Raṅgadevī-kuṇḍa.



Śrī Madana-mohana

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, followed by a



Rūpa-sāgara

huge crowd, came here on His way to Śrī Vṛndāvana, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī told Him that it is inappropriate to go to Vṛndāvana surrounded by so many people, as one's heart's sentiments would diminish. Hearing this, Mahāprabhu returned to Jagannātha Purī. A year later He again journeyed to Vṛndāvana by the Jhārikhaṇḍa path with just Śrī Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya and one *brāhmaṇa* servant.

Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmīs

The brothers, Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana, are intimate associates of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī was Lavaṅga Mañjarī and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī was Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. The four Kumāras are also present in Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī.

Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and their youngest brother Anupama, were Yajurvedīya Bhāradvāja Gotrīya *brāhmaṇas*, whose



A *tamāla* and *keli-kadamba* tree grow where Mahāprabhu sat.

forefathers hailed from Karnāṭaka, South India. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī's previous name was Amara and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's name was Santoṣa. From childhood they demonstrated sharp intellect and studied all the *śāstras* from the crown jewel of Śrī Navadvīpa's teachers, Śrī Vidyā-vācaspati. Their special interest was *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

In their youth, the three brothers became royal ministers in the kingdom of Hussain Shah, the emperor of Gauḍa. He had appointed Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī as his Prime Minister and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī as his Private Secretary, giving them the titles "Sākara Mallika" and "Dabhira Khāsa". They oversaw all the royal affairs with such expertise that the Emperor became completely dependent on them.

When Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to Rāmakeli on the pretext of going to Vṛndāvana, both Rūpa and Sanātana took off their royal attire. Accepting very humble dress they came to take



Śyāma-kuṇḍa (foreground) and Rādhā-kuṇḍa (background)

darśana of Mahāprabhu's lotus feet; thus their lives attained complete success. Just by seeing Mahāprabhu, their already perfected renunciation and attachment to Bhagavān spontaneously overflowed. Now their minds and hearts were completely detached from royal duties, and they passed their time studying *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and worshipping the Supreme Lord.

Later, on another pilgrimage, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Vṛndāvana. When Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī received news of this he retired from his royal duties and proceeded to go there, along with his younger brother Anupama. By the time they arrived Śrīman Mahāprabhu had left Vṛndāvana to return to Purī. On His way He arrived in Prayāga and it was there that He again met Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Anupama. Mahāprabhu stayed with Rūpa Gosvāmī in Prayāga for ten days, instructing him on the conclusive truths of *bhakti-rasa* and *prema*. He also empowered Rūpa



Lalitā-kuṇḍa

Gosvāmī to manifest the lost holy places of Vṛndāvana and to compose devotional literature.

Mahāprabhu then proceeded to Kāśī. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, who was now indifferent towards his royal duties, desired to abandon such materialistic life. However the Emperor objected to his proposal and imprisoned him. Sanātana Gosvāmī then received a mysterious message from Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and as a result of understanding that message, he successfully escaped. He went to Kāśī, where he met with Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu stayed with Sanātana Gosvāmī in Kāśī for some time, giving him lucid instructions on *jīva-tattva*, *bhagavad-tattva*, *māyā-tattva* and *sambandha-tattva*. He explained that the performance of devotional service (*bhakti*) is *abhidheya-tattva* and that pure love of God (*kṛṣṇa-prema*) is *prayojana-tattva*. Empowering him thus, Mahāprabhu ordered him to go to Vṛndāvana and manifest the lost holy places there, compose



Viśākhā-kuṇḍa

devotional literature and establish the worship of the ancient deities of Vṛndāvana. Thus empowered, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī fulfilled Śrīman Mahāprabhu's inner desire by manifesting lost holy places of Vṛndāvana, establishing the service of Śrī Madana-mohana, and compiling *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛtam* and a commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's* Tenth Canto.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī fulfilled Śrīman Mahāprabhu's inner desire in the following ways. He manifested the service of Śrī Rādhā-Govindadeva and re-discovered other lost holy places of Vṛndāvana. In particular he compiled priceless devotional literature such as *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, *Lalita-mādhava*, *Vidagdha-mādhava*, *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛtam*, *Stava-mālā*, *Uddhava-sandeśa*, *Haṁsa-dūta*, *Dāna-keli-kaumudī* and *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*. The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* is eternally indebted to these two great personalities.

Śrī Anupama

Śrī Anupama was Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana's younger brother, and like them, was a high-ranking government official in the government of Emperor Hussein Shah. Together with Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī he fully renounced material life and went to Śrī Vṛndāvana.

Anupama was a devotee of Śrī Rāmacandra. Once, Rūpa Gosvāmī told him about the sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and instructed him to make Him his worshipful Lord instead. Anupama humbly accepted this instruction, but wept all night, tormented by an incessant restlessness. Early the next morning he came to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and said, "Without worshipping Śrī Rāmacandra I cannot remain alive. On the other hand I cannot disobey your order. Under these circumstances the only auspicious action for me to take is to die." Pleased, Rūpa Gosvāmī advised him to continue his determined and faithful worship of Lord Rāma. He travelled to Purī with Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī to take *darśana* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, but on the way there, he left this world. His son was the famous Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī.

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was the son of Śrī Anupama (Vallabha). As a young boy he took *darśana* of Mahāprabhu when He came to the village of Rāmakeli. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī placed Jīva at the feet of Mahāprabhu, who placed His lotus hands on Jīva's head.

Jīva studied grammar and the scriptures when he was quite young, after which he went to Navadvīpa where Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu took him on Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu also took him for *darśana* of Śrī Viṣṇuprīyā. He then sent Jīva to Rūpa and Sanātana in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

On the way Jīva stopped in Kāsī for some time and studied Vedānta under Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya's disciple, Śrī Madhusūdana Vācaspati. In particular he studied the Vedānta, as Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya had heard it from Śrīman Mahāprabhu. When he arrived in Vṛndāvana he took shelter at Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's lotus feet, and Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs instructed him on all *bhakti* literature. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī gave him *dīkṣā* and taught him the content of the books he had written.

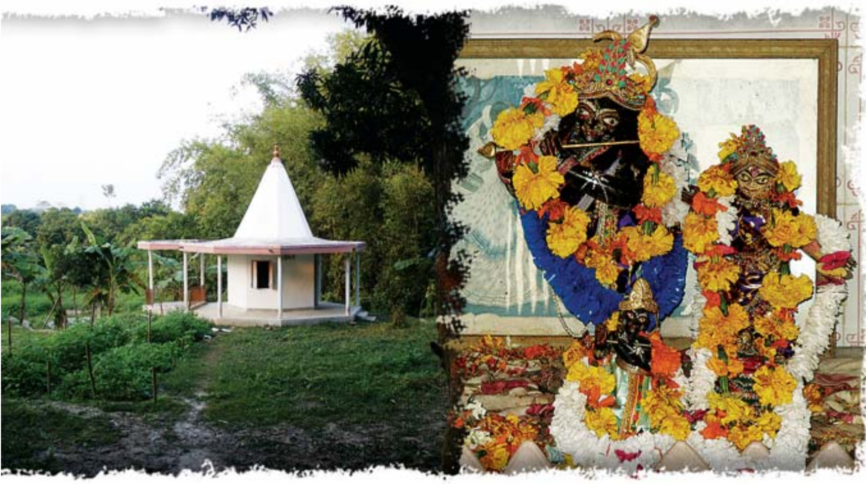
In his time, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was renowned as the world's greatest scholar. Vaiṣṇavas of the three *dhāmas* – Vraja-maṇḍala, Gauḍa-maṇḍala and Kṣetra-maṇḍala – used to take instruction from him. He instructed Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu in the entirety of *bhakti* literature. Among his major works are the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhas*, *Sarvasamvādinī*, *Harināmāmṛta-vyākaraṇa*, *Gopala-campū*, *Mādhava-mahotsava*, *Krama-sandarbha*, and commentaries on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* and *Brahma-samhitā*.

Saidābāda

Saidābāda is situated on the Gaṅgā's bank one mile west of Kāsima-bāzāra in the Murśidābāda district, and is the residence of Śrī Harirāma Ācārya Prabhu, a disciple of Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja. This is also where Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura studied the scriptures on *bhakti*.

Śaṅkhanagara

Śaṅkhanagara is one of the seven villages comprising Saptagrāma. It is situated on River Sarasvatī's bank, near the village called Magarāra, and is the *śrīpāṭa* of Kālidāsa, Śrīla



Jhaḍū Ṭhākura's *samādhi* (left) and his Madana-gopāla deity (right)

Raghunātha dāsa's paternal uncle. Kālidāsa would search out well-known Vaiṣṇavas, even if they resided far away, offer them items such as fruits and sweets, and listen to them speak *hari-kathā*. The Vaiṣṇavas would offer to their deity whatever he gave them. After honouring the *prasāda*, they would throw away the peels, stones, leaves, leafcups and so forth, and Kālidāsa, who would be hiding nearby, ate or licked whatever remnants they discarded. He would then dance in euphoric bliss.

Once Kālidāsa went to a remote village where the great devotee Jhaḍū Ṭhākura resided. Jhaḍū Ṭhākura was born into a *śūdra* family. That evening Kālidāsa came to his house, offered him some sweet, ripe mangoes and listened to him speak *hari-kathā*. At nightfall Kālidāsa took his leave and hid nearby. Jhaḍū Ṭhākura's wife washed and offered some of the mangoes and then gave them to her husband. Then she took his remnants and threw what was left on to the scrap pile outside their house. This was just the opportunity Kālidāsa had been waiting for. He

quickly retrieved the peels and stones from the pile and proceeded to suck them.

Kālidāsa had firm faith in the potency of the Vaiṣṇavas' remnants. This made Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu so satisfied with him that He never objected to Kālidāsa daily drinking the water that had washed His feet at Jagannātha Temple's lion gate. He did not allow anyone else to drink this water, but was so pleased with Kālidāsa's service to the Vaiṣṇavas that he bestowed such great fortune upon him.



Śāntipura

Śāntipura is situated on the bank of the Gaṅgā, and is the *śrīpāṭa* of Śrī Advaita Ācārya, Śrī Harṣa and Śrī Gopāla Ācāryas. Today Śrī Advaita Ācārya's Nṛsiṁha *śilā* and the deity of Śrī Madana-gopāla accept worship here. Śrī Gaura and Śrī



The meeting place of Śrī Gaura, Nityānanda Prabhu and Advaita Ācārya

Nityānanda Prabhu used to come here to meet with Śrī Advaita Ācārya.

Śrī Advaita Ācārya



Advaita Ācārya as worshipped in Śāntipura

Śrī Advaita Ācārya is one of the Pañca-tattva, and a disciple of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī. In his previous pastimes he was Devādideva Mahādeva (Lord Śiva). He appeared in a Vārendra *brāhmaṇa* family in Lāuḍa Navagrāma on Śuklā-saptamī in the month of Māgha, 1355 of the Śaka Era (A.D.1434) and lived for 125 years. His father's name was Kuvera Paṇḍita and his mother was

Nābhā-devī. His previous name was Kamalākṣa Veda Pañcānana. His two wives were Śrī Sītā-devī and Śrī Devī. Sītā-devī gave birth to Acyutānanda and five other sons, and Śrī Devī gave birth to Śyāmadāsa. Śrī Viśvarūpa, Nimāī's elder brother, studied under Advaita Ācārya.

Śrī Advaita Ācārya is an incarnation of Mahā Viṣṇu. Previously He worshipped a *śāligrāma-śilā* with *tulasī* leaves and Gaṅgā water, thus causing Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself to appear as Śrī Gaurāṅga, resplendent with the sentiments and bodily complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrī Advaita Ācārya participated in all the important pastimes of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and to attain the Lord's *darśana*, Śrī Advaita would yearly travel to Jagannātha Purī at the time of the Ratha-yātrā festival. He disowned those of his sons who were devoid of devotion to the Lord, accepting his youngest son, Acyuta, an unalloyed devotee of Śrī Gaura, as his only real son. The glorious Advaita Ācārya shared a deep friendship with Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and was well versed in all scriptures. He would honour every Vaiṣṇava regardless of that Vaiṣṇava's caste or family.

He wanted to reveal to the world that Mahāprabhu is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself and worshipped Him for this reason. Śrīman Mahāprabhu, however, respected Advaita Ācārya as His spiritual master and would not accept his worship. This disturbed Advaita Ācārya who returned to Śāntipura, where he began to explain the *Gītā* according to impersonal philosophy. When Śrīman Mahāprabhu heard him speak like this, He threw the elderly Advaita Ācārya to the ground before the entire assembly and repeatedly punched him. Sītā-devī tried to restrain the Lord, but He did not acknowledge her entreaty and threatened Advaita with proud words that actually revealed His own

opulences. Advaita Ācārya became jubilant and jumped up in bliss. Turning to Mahāprabhu he said, "Now that You have caught a thief, the relationship between the Lord and His servant has been strengthened." Understanding Advaita Ācārya's real purpose for having preached impersonalism, Mahāprabhu became ashamed to have beaten him.

Because Advaita Ācārya is non-different from Śrī Hari, he is called "Advaita" (meaning "non-dual"), and because he is an authority in and teacher of the philosophical principles of *bhakti*, he is called "Ācārya".

Once Śacī-mātā referred to Advaita Ācārya as "Dvaita Ācārya" because he separated a son (Viśvarūpa) from his mother (herself) by making him a *sannyāsī* and sending him away. Displeased with His mother's words Mahāprabhu did not bestow *kṛṣṇa-prema* upon her. The devotees asked why, since He had bestowed it upon all His other devotees. Mahāprabhu angrily said, "She is an offender at the feet of Advaita Ācārya." Śrī Śacī-devī then went to Śāntipura and beseeched Advaita Ācārya to forgive her. Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave *kṛṣṇa-prema* to His mother on Advaita Ācārya's request.

His pilgrimage to India's holy places brought him to Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana and he visited all twelve forests there. From Vṛndāvana he went to Mithilā, where he was astonished to see that a divine-looking, elderly *brāhmaṇa* had placed his head at the root of a tree and was weeping as he sang the following verses:

tātala saikate, vāri-bindu-sama,
suta-mita-ramaṇī-samāje
tohe visari mana, tāhe samarpinu,
ab majhu habo kon kāje

O my Lord, completely forgetting You, I offered my mind unto the society of women, children and friends; but this experience has been just like offering a drop of water to a beach's burning sands. How can I possibly be relieved of this great misery?

ādha janama hāma, ninde goṅāyanu,
jarā śiśu koto-dina gelā
nidhuvane ramaṇī, rasa-raṅge mātanu,
tohe bhajabo kon belā

Wandering about in a half-alive condition, I have spent my life in utter disgrace. I passed uncountable days as a frivolous child and now as a useless old man, and I have been intoxicated by the pleasure of sharing romantic adventures with beautiful young women. When will I ever get a chance to worship You?

koto caturānana, mari mari jāota,
na tuyā ādi avasānā
tohe janami puna, tohe samāota,
sāgara-laharī samānā

Numberless Brahmās die one after another, whereas You are without beginning or end. All such Brahmās take birth from You and are again absorbed into You, just like waves in the ocean.

Hearing these verses Advaita Ācārya inquired about the *brāhmaṇa's* identity. When he found out he was none other than Śrī Vidyāpati they affectionately embraced. It is said that Advaita Ācārya also met Śrī Caṇḍīdāsa, the renowned Bengali Vaiṣṇava poet.

Saptagrāma

The residences of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Śrī Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura are situated here. Saptagrāma, meaning "seven villages", comprised Saptagrāma, Veśavāṭī, Śivapura, Vāsudevapura, Kṛṣṇapura (or Cāṅdapura), Nityānandapura and Śaṅkhanagara (the present Triveṇī-grāma). At that time Saptagrāma was quite prosperous. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was a resident of Kṛṣṇapura, Śrī Kālīdāsa Lāhiḍī – of Śaṅkhanagar, and Śrī Balarāma Ācārya – of Cāṅdapura. The family *guru* of Raghunātha dāsa, Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya, was also a resident of Cāṅdapura. Nityānanda Prabhu would visit Saptagrāma.



The Ṣaḍ-bhūja deity (middle) worshipped by Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura


Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura's *samādhi* in Saptagrāma

The actual name of Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura was Divākara. His wife died when he was twenty-six. He then left home and travelled with Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and preached *bhakti-dharma*.

The two brothers Hiraṇya dāsa and Govardhana dāsa lived in Saptagrāma, and were extremely wealthy landowners. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was the son of Govardhana dāsa. Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā-devī's father, Śrī Sanātana Miśra, was the spiritual master of Hiraṇya dāsa and Govardhana dāsa.

Śītala-grāma

This village, previously called Siddhala-grāma, lies on the Vardhamāna-Kaṭavā railway line, one mile northeast of Kaicara station. The residence of Śrī Dhanañjaya Paṇḍita, one of the twelve *gopālas*, is here. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* Dhanañjaya Paṇḍita was Vasudāma. He was born in Pāḍagrāma in the Caṭṭagrāma district. His father was Śrīpati Bandhopādhyāya, his mother was Kālindī-devī, and his wife was Hari-priyā. He gave everything he owned to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and kept only one empty pot. To preach Vaiṣṇava-dharma he travelled to many places, finally arriving at Śītala-grāma, where he established the deities of Śrī Gaura-Nitāī and Śrī Gopīnātha.

Śrīkhaṇḍa



Madhu-puṣkariṇī

Śrīkhaṇḍa village is situated one mile from Śrīpāṭa Śrīkhaṇḍa railway station on the line between Vardhamāna and Kaṭavā, and is the residence of Śrī Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura. Numerous eminent and celebrated Vaiṣṇavas resided here, such as Mukunda Ṭhākura, Śrī Raghunandana, Śrī Cirañjīva, Sulocana, Dāmodara Kavirāja, Rāmacandra Kavirāja, Govinda Kavirāja, Balarāma dāsa, Ratikānta Ṭhākura, Rāma-gopāla dāsa, Pītāmbara dāsa, Śacīnandana dāsa and Jagadānanda. Among the places of *darśana* here are Śrī Narahari Sarakāra's house and place of *bhajana*, Madhu-puṣkariṇī, Baḍaḍāṅgā *bhajana-sthalī*, the deities of Śrī Gopīnātha and Śrī Gaurāṅga, as well as the deities established by Raghunandana's son Kanhāī Ṭhākura – Viṣṇupriyā, Śyāma-rāya and Madana-gopāla.

Śrī Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura

In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura was the *prāṇa-sakhī* Madhumati. He appeared in 1405 of the Śaka Era (A.D. 1483). His father's name was Nārāyaṇadeva and mother was Guī-devī. His elder brother was Mukunda Ṭhākura, whose son



Śrī Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura's house



and his place of *bhajana*



(from left) Śyāma-rāya, Gopīnātha, Gaurāṅga, Viṣṇupriyā and Madana-gopāla

was the well-known Raghunandana Ṭhākura. Narahari Ṭhākura was a noted scholar, poet and a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava. Even before meeting Śrīman Mahāprabhu he composed poetry in both Sanskrit and Bengali about Śrī Rādhā-Govinda's pastimes. He and Gadādhara Paṇḍita later lived with and served Śrīman Mahāprabhu. His own specific service to Mahāprabhu was fanning Him with a *cāmara*. He composed *Bhakti-candrikakā Paṭala*, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhajanāmṛtam*, *Śrī Caitanya-sahasra-nāma*, *Śrī Śacīnandanāṣṭaka* and *Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka*. He also composed much sweet, nectar-like poetry. His deity of Śrī Gaurāṅga is still being worshipped here. Śrī Raghunandana, the son of his elder brother Mukunda Ṭhākura, continued his family line.

Once, Śrī Gauracandra and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu came to Śrīkhaṇḍa and asked Śrī Narahari Ṭhākura for some honey to drink. With his powers Śrī Narahari Ṭhākura transformed the water of a nearby pond into honey, and in this way they were satisfied. That pond is still called Madhu-puṣkariṇī, the pond of honey.

Śrī Mukunda Sarakāra Ṭhākura

Mukunda Ṭhākura is the elder brother of Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura, who is in a branch of the Caitanya tree. His son was Raghunandana. Mukunda Ṭhākura married on the order of Mahāprabhu and was the royal physician of Hussein Shah, the emperor of Bengal. One day, while sitting on an elevated platform beside the king, Mukunda observed the royal servant fanning the king with a fan of peacock feathers. Seeing the peacock feathers, he became overwhelmed in ecstatic rapture and fell to the ground in a faint. When he regained consciousness he excused his behaviour by telling the inquisitive king that he suffered from epilepsy. The king, however, could understand that Mukunda's fainting had been caused by his internal sentiments, and the king's respect for him increased. Mukunda later left the post of royal physician to study devotional literature in Navadvīpa with Mahāprabhu.

One day in Jagannātha Purī, Śrīman Mahāprabhu asked Mukunda, "Is Raghunandana your son or are you his son?"

With great humility Mukunda answered, "Raghunandana is my father."

"Why?" Mahāprabhu asked.

"Because through him I have attained *bhagavad-bhakti* and affection for You."

These words greatly pleased Mahāprabhu and His devotees.

Narahari Sarakāra helped raise Raghunandana, the son of Mukunda Ṭhākura. In his early childhood, Raghunandana's love-filled devotion induced Gopīnātha, the family deity, to eat a sweet ball made of rice. And, by the influence of Raghunandana a *kadamba* tree on Madhu-puṣkariṇī's bank would give just two *kadamba* flowers daily, which he used in the worship of Śrī Gopīnātha.



Baḍaḍāṅgā *bhajana-sthalī*

Once Śrī Abhirāma Gosvāmī came to Śrīkhaṇḍa. Whomever Abhirāma Gosvāmī paid his obeisances to would die. But when, he offered his obeisances to Raghunandana Ṭhākura, he accepted them and embraced Abhirāma. Raghunandana then took him to the *kīrtana* at the *bhajana-sthalī* in Baḍaḍāṅgā.

Śrī Narahari Sarakāra once became so absorbed in dancing in the *kīrtana* at Baḍaḍāṅga that his anklebell (*nūpura*) broke off and landed in the home of his disciple, Kṛṣṇadāsa, who lived in Ākāīhāṭa some distance away. Even today there is a pond in Ākāīhāṭa known as Nūpura-kuṇḍa.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who inaugurated *saṅkīrtana*, considered Raghunandana His son. On the *adhivāsa* [the day before a function begins], of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, Mahāprabhu gave Raghunandana the privilege of



A memorial dedicated to Śrī Cirañjīva Sena and his two sons, Rāmacandra Kavirāja and Govinda Kavirāja

offering garlands, sandalwood pulp and other articles to the devotees present, and on the day of the festival's completion He had him perform the ritual of breaking the pot filled with yogurt and turmeric.

Śrī Cirañjīva Sena

Cirañjīva Sena moved his residence from Kumāranagara to Śrīkhaṇḍa. He was a disciple of Narahari Sarakāra, and his two sons, Rāmacandra Kavirāja and Govinda Kavirāja, were well-known poets. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he was Candrikā or Rūpakaṇṭhī Sakhī.

Śrī Dāmodara Kavirāja

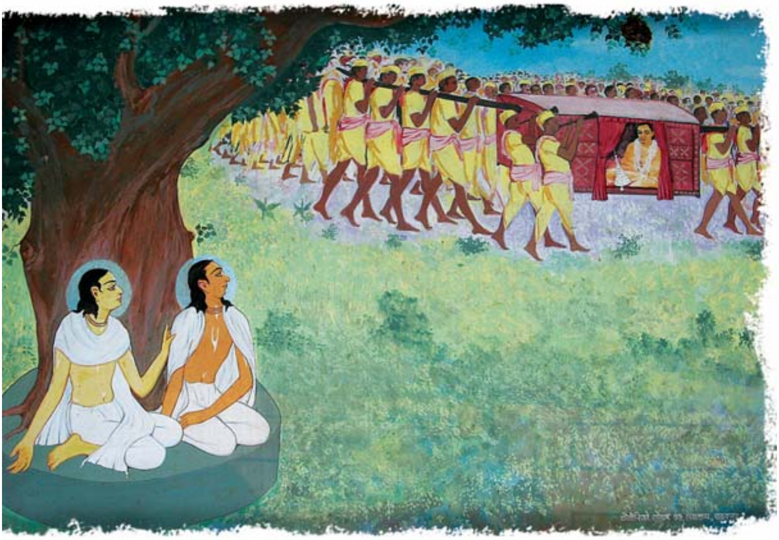
Dāmodara Kavirāja is also known as Dāmodara Sena and was a distinguished poet and scholar. His daughter, Śrī Sunandā, was married to Cirañjīva Sena.



Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja

Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja

Rāmacandra Kavirāja was a disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, and was the son of Cirañjīva Sena and Sunandā-devī. In



Rāmacandra Kavirāja's wedding party

kṛṣṇa-līlā he was Karuṇā Mañjarī. His maternal grandfather, Śrī Dāmodara Kavirāja, was Śrī Narahari Sarakāra's disciple. When his father left this world, he moved to Kumāra-nagara where his maternal grandfather resided. He later lived in the village of Teliyā-budhurī in the Murśidābāda district. At the time of Rāmacandra Kavirāja's wedding, Śrīnivāsa Prabhu saw him in his wedding attire and said, "With his own money a man buys illusion, then he ties a noose around his neck and considers himself successful." The next day Rāmacandra renounced his home and became a disciple of Śrīnivāsa Prabhu.

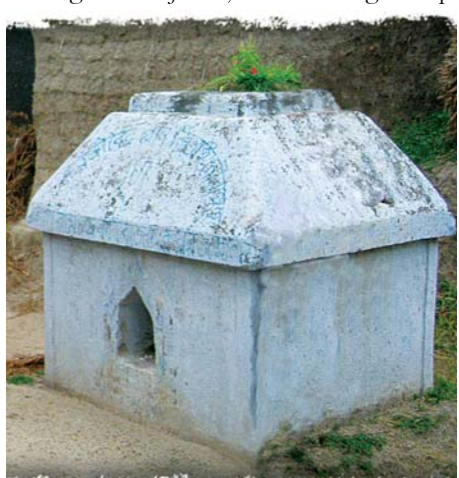
Rāmacandra Kavirāja was the the instructing spiritual master of King Vīrahamvīra of Viṣṇupura. His devotion to his spiritual master was unparalleled. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī was so impressed by his poetry that he gave him the title "Kavirāja". Rāmacandra is one of the *aṣṭa-kavis*, or eight poets. His most prominent books are *Smaraṇa-camatkāra*, *Smaraṇa-darpaṇa*, *Siddhānta-candrikā* and the biography of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya.

Although Rāmacandra Kavirāja was married, he was completely detached and never became entangled in worldly life. His wife's name was Ratnamālā. The descendants of his brother, Govinda Kavirāja, are still present.

Śrī Govinda Kavirāja

Śrī Govinda Kavirāja was a disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. His mother was Sunandā-devī, his father Śrī Cirañjīva Sena and his elder brother, Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja. He was born in Teliyā-budhurī. His wife's name was Mahāmāyā-devī and his son was Divya Siṁha. When his father left this world Govinda went with his mother and elder brother to the house of his maternal grandfather, Śrī Dāmodara Kavirāja, in Kumāra-nagara.

Govinda Kavirāja heard Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's mercy-filled words to Rāmacandra Kavirāja at the time of Rāmacandra's wedding, and from then on remained in the shelter of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. He had previously been a Śākta, worshipper of Śakti (Durgā) and although he was advancing in *bhajana*, could not give up his worship of Śakti. Once, by great fortune, he became severely ill. Understanding that his death was imminent he petitioned his brother, Rāmacandra Kavirāja, and begged to receive *darśana* of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu's lotus feet. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya then came to the village of Budhurī and placed



Śrī Govinda Kavirāja's *samādhi*

his feet on Govinda Kavirāja's head. That moment changed his life and he gained fresh enthusiasm for *bhajana*. The first song he wrote after this event was the very beautiful: "*bhajahuṅ re mana śrī nanda-nandana abhaya-caraṇāravinda re* – O mind, serve the lotus feet of Nanda-nandana, which grant fearlessness."

His mind became fixed in composing poetry solely about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Some of his best-known compositions are *Śrī Rāma-caritra-gītā*, *Saṅgīta-mādhava Nāṭaka* and *Aṣṭa-kālīya Ekānana Pada*. Impressed by his extraordinary poetic talent, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and other leading Vaiṣṇavas used to correspond with him. The Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana honoured him with the titles "Kavirāja" and "Kavīndra". He is one of the eight poets, forever remembered, respected and worshipped by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrī Sulocana

Śrī Sulocana was one of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's associates and in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he was Candraśekharā Gopī.

Śrī Balarāma dāsa

Śrī Balarāma dāsa was Jāhnavā-devī's disciple and he also received instruction on *bhajana* from Narahari Sarakāra. He participated in the historic festival at Kheturī.

Śrī Ratikānta Ṭhākura

Śrī Ratikānta Ṭhākura was the grandson of Madana Ṭhākura of Śrīkhaṇḍa and a *digvijayī-paṇḍita*. He composed *Śrī Gaura-śataka* and established the famous deity of Śrī Madana-gopāla in Śrīkhaṇḍa. Śrī Gopāla dāsa, who composed *Śrī Rasa-kalpavallī*, was his disciple.

Śrī Rāma-gopāla dāsa

Śrī Rāma-gopāla dāsa was a resident of Śrīkhaṇḍa and a disciple of Ratikānta Ṭhākura, who was in the lineage of Śrī Raghunandana. He compiled the poem *Rasa-kalpavallī*, which has twelve divisions.

Śrī Rāmapura-cātarā

Śrī Rāmapura-cātarā is the residential place of Śrī Kāśīśvara Paṇḍita, an associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in the branch of Śrī Śaṅkarāraṇya. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he was Keli Mañjarī. He was born in 1420 in the Śaka Era (A.D. 1498) in Brāhmaṇa-ḍāṅgā village in the Yaśohara district. His father's name was Śrī Vāsudeva Ācārya and his mother was Śrī Jāhnavā-devī. From his childhood he was a *brahmacārī* attracted to Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva. He left home in his youth and went to Śrīdhāma Purī. On his mother's request he established Śrī Gaura-Nitāī deities in Cātarā and began to worship Them.

Tālakharī

Tālakharī is situated midway between the towns of Magura and Yaśohara in Bangladesh. It is the appearance-place of Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī who later found and established the worship of the deity of Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda in Kiśorī-kuṇḍa (a pond situated in Umrāo Village in Chattravana, Śrīdhāma Vṛndāvana). Fearing name and fame, Lokanātha Gosvāmī



Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī's birthsite



Lokanātha Āśrama, Tālakharī

forbade Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja to mention him in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. His disciple, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura, preached Vaiṣṇava-dharma throughout eastern India.

Tamaluka, or Tāmralipti

Tamaluka, an ancient city in the Medinīpura district, is situated on the bank of the River Rūpa-nārāyaṇa. In ancient times it was a renowned port and the capital of famous kings. During the time of the Mahābhārata War, when King Mayūradhvaja fought the Pāṇḍavas here, he recognised Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa. He requested Śrī Kṛṣṇa to continually give him His *darśana*, and since then Śrī Kṛṣṇa is present here as Jiṣṇu-hari, a deity of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa.

The twenty-third chief of the Jains, Pārśvanātha, came to this place and preached against the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the Vedas. The Buddhists had one of their main monasteries here.

Emperor Aśoka of the Maurya Empire annexed Tāmralipti and established an Aśoka pillar here.

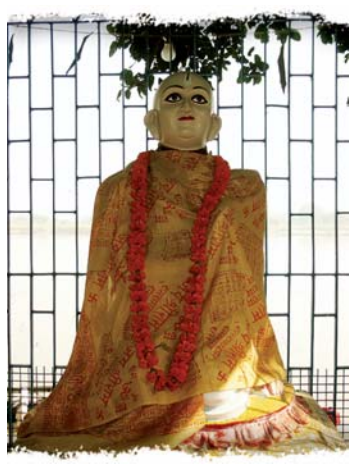
After Śrīman Mahāprabhu accepted the renounced order, Vāsudeva Ghoṣa could not remain in Nadīyā without Mahāprabhu. Thus he moved to Tamaluka, where he established a deity of Śrīman Mahāprabhu whom he worshipped.

Triveṇī

When Nityānanda Prabhu resided in Saptagrāma, He used to take bath at Triveṇī-ghāṭa, which is at the confluence of the Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī.

Uddhāraṇa-pura

Uddhāraṇa-pura is situated in the Vardhamāna district on Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī's bank, two miles north of Kaṭavā. This was the residential place of Śrī Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura, a dear associate of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. His *samādhi* is here. It is said that Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu used to sit beneath an old neem tree nearby.



Śrī Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura

Śrī Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura is foremost among the twelve cowherd boys (*dvādaśa-gopālas*) in the Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu branch of the Caitanya tree. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he was Śrī Subāhu Sakhā. He took birth in Kṛṣṇapura of Saptagrāma in a prosperous family belonging to the *suvarṇa-vaṇik* community. His father's name was Śrīkara Datta and his



Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura's *samādhi*

mother's name was Bhadrāvatī. Upon completing his education he entered household life and was appointed the manager of King Nairājā's estate in Navahaṭṭa (Naihāṭī) near Kaṭavā. At that time Śrī Uddhāraṇa Datta Ṭhākura lived in the nearby village named Uddhāraṇa-pura after him. By the influence of Śrī

Nityānanda Prabhu's association, he later left everything – his vast wealth, home and so forth – and served Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. He roamed about with Nityānanda Prabhu propagating the glories of the Lord's holy name and devotion to Him. In the year 1436 in the Śaka Era (A.D. 1514) on Agrahāyaṇī-kṛṣṇa-trayodaśī, at the age of sixty, he entered his unmanifest pastimes.

Vāghnāpāḍā

Vāghnāpāḍā is the first train station on the line from Ambikā-kālanā to Navadvīpa. It is the residential place of Śrī Vaṁśī-vadanānanda and his son Rāmāī Ṭhākura (or Śrī Rāmacandra Gosvāmī). [See "Dāīhāṭa".]

Vākalācandradvīpa

Śrī Kumāradeva, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī's father, lived at Vākalā after leaving Naihāṭī. Śrī Sanātana (Amara), Śrī Rūpa (Santoṣa) and Śrī Vallabha (Anupama) took birth here. Śrī Candraśekhara Ācārya also resided here for some time.

Śrī Candraśekhara Ācārya

Śrī Candraśekhara Ācārya, also known as Ācāryaratna, was Mahāprabhu's maternal uncle. He was born in the Śrīhaṭṭa district, but later lived in Navadvīpa-dhāma. Śrīman Mahāprabhu danced in the mood of the supreme goddess of fortune in his house. He used to participate in Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana*, and was present when He accepted the renounced order in Kaṭavā. It was Candraśekhara Ācārya who gave the news of Mahāprabhu's *sannyāsa* to the residents of Śāntipura and Navadvīpa.

Vakreśvara

This village, also called Gupta Kāśī, is situated thirteen miles southwest of Siuḍī in the Vīrabhūma district. The sage Aṣṭāvakra performed austerities here. In the north of Vakreśvara are the rivers Vakreśvara and Pāpaharā. In a temple courtyard is Śveta-gaṅgā and a *śiva-liṅga* called Vakreśvara. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu visited this place.

Vallabhapura

Śrī Kāśīśvara Paṇḍita and Śrī Rudra Paṇḍita, two of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates, resided here. Their deity, Śrī Rādhā-Vallabha, is still worshipped in Vallabhapura. On Mahāprabhu's order Śrī Kāśīśvara Paṇḍita established and served the Gaura-Govinda deity here. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes he was Keli Mañjarī.

Kāśīśvara Paṇḍita had deep affection for Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs. He used to live in Purī-dhāma near Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and although he had no desire to leave that place, Mahāprabhu gave him a deity of Himself and ordered him to go to Vṛndāvana. He complied with the Lord's instruction. Śrī Rudra Paṇḍita was Varuthaka, a cowherd boy, in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.



Photo courtesy Śrī Rādhā-Vallabha Temple, Vallabhapura

Śrī Rādhā-Vallabha

Vanaviṣṇupura

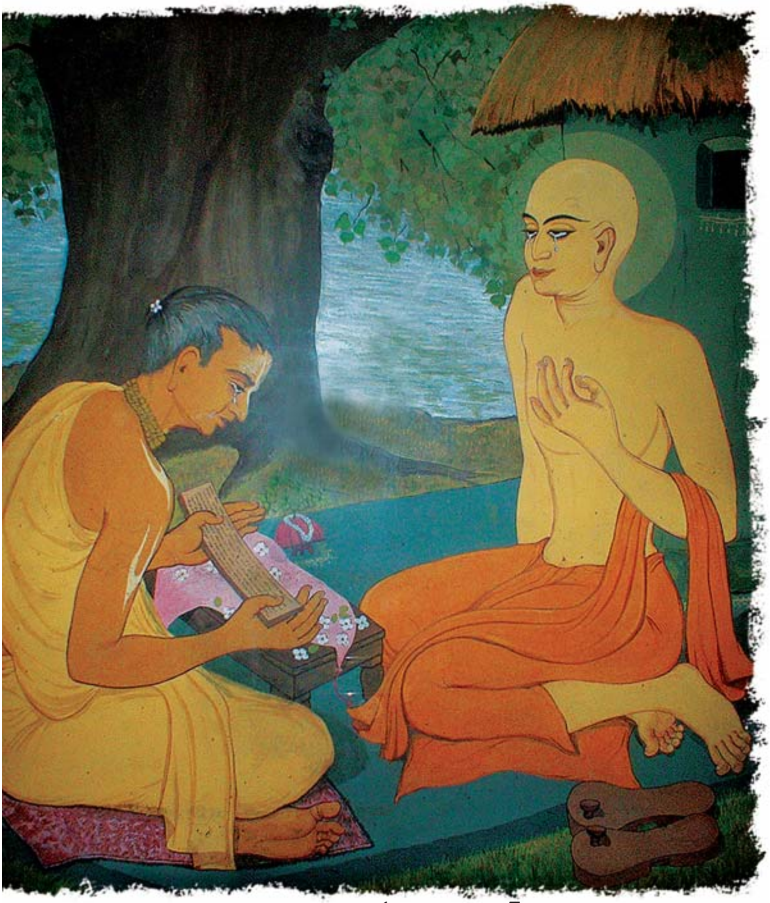
Vanaviṣṇupura is situated in the Bāṅkuḍā district and was the capital of King Vīrahamvīra. One night, as Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu were bringing Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature in a bullock cart from Vṛndāvana, the king stole the cart, thinking it to be filled with jewels. Later, in his royal court, when the king heard Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's supremely beautiful recitation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he returned the books. He accepted initiation and became a great Vaiṣṇava. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī named him Caitanya dāsa. At the time of King Vīrahamvīra, Vanaviṣṇupura was prosperous in all respects.

The temple of Śrī Madana-mohana is the most famous temple in Vanaviṣṇupura. The temples of Śrī Śyāma-rāya, Kālācandra-muralī-manohara and Madana-gopāla are also here. Once, when enemies attacked this place, Śrī Madana-mohana ignited the weapon named Dalamādala, which was like a machine-gun, and the attackers fled.

At present Śrī Madana-mohana graces the residence of the late Śrī Gokulacandra Mitra of Kolkata. It is said that once, due to lack of funds, the descendants King Vīrahamvīra pawned Śrī Madana-mohana. Since then the deity presides in Bāgabāzāra, Kolkata.

Varāhanagara

Varāhanagara is the place of Śrī Bhāgavata Ācārya's residence. His *samādhi* is also here. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came here He became very delighted to hear Śrī Bhāgavata Ācārya's *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-prema-taraṅginī*, a poetic translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that is filled with exalted philosophical conclusions.



Painting inside Śrī Bhāgavata Ācārya's *samādhi* temple – Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu hears Bhāgavata Ācārya's *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-prema-taraṅginī*

Vrajarājapura

Vrajarājapura, situated in the Bāṅkuḍā district, is a pastime-place of Śrī Gadādhara dāsa, an associate of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

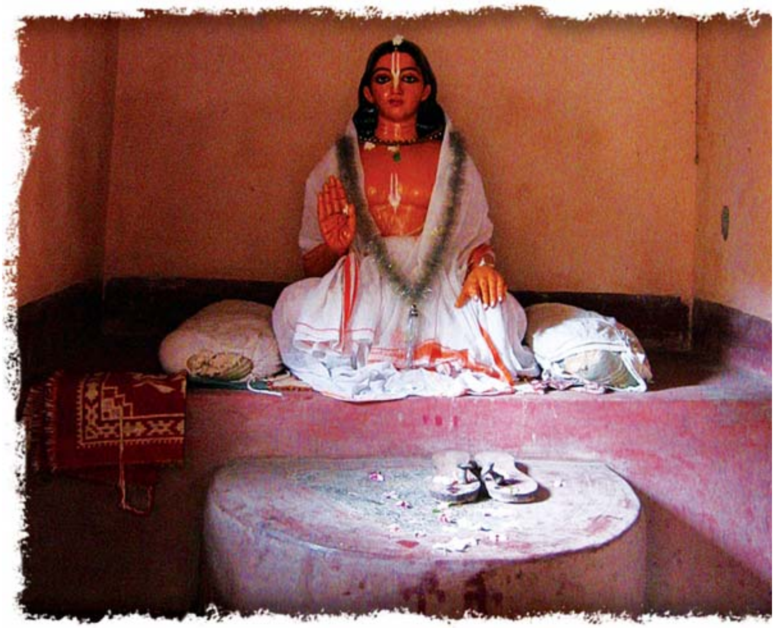
Śrī Gadādhara dāsa

Śrī Gadādhara dāsa used to live in Eṅḍiyādaha on the bank of the Gaṅgā. He also lived in Purī-dhāma near Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

When Mahāprabhu ordered Nityānanda Prabhu to distribute love of God in Bengal, He sent Gadādhara dāsa with Him. Dāsa Gadādhara was very powerful and out-spoken. One day he advised the Muslim Kazi in his village to chant the holy name, and by his mercy the Kazi became a Vaiṣṇava. While residing in Navadvīpa he looked after Śacī-mātā and Viṣṇupriyā-devī. His temple, house and *samādhi* are still present in Eṅḍiyādaha.

Yājīgrāma

Yājīgrāma is situated in the Vardhamāna district, a short distance south of Kaṭavā, and is Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's *śrīpāṭa*.



Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's *bhajana-kuṭī*

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu

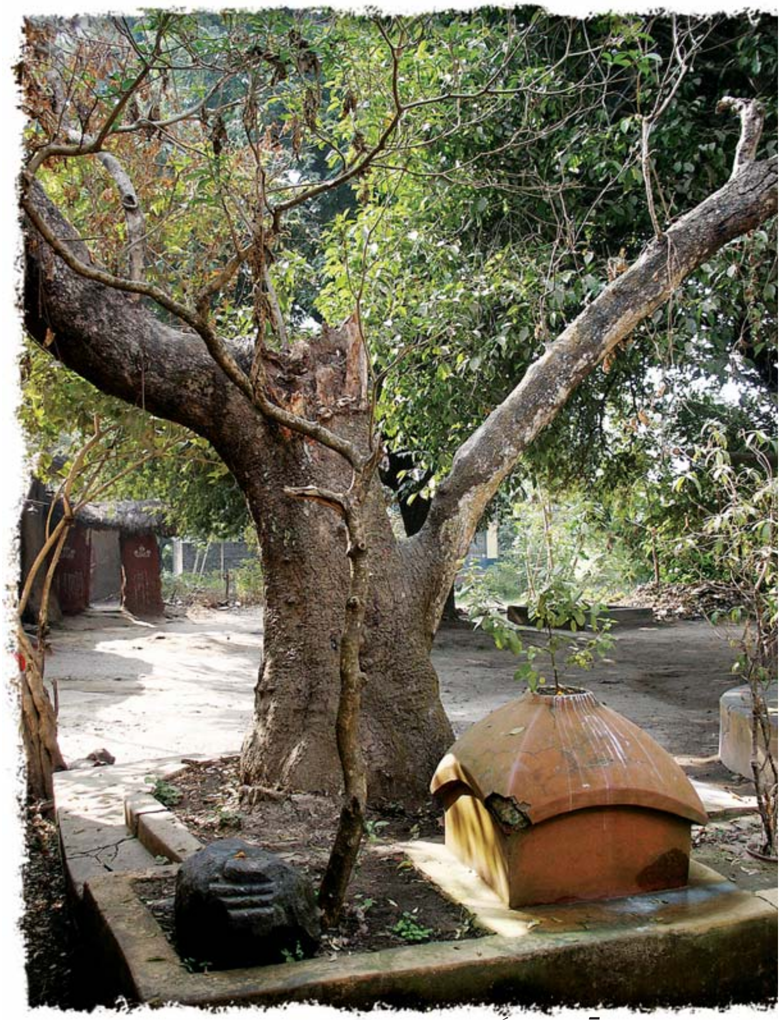
Śrīnivāsa Ācārya appeared in a *brāhmaṇa* family in the village of Cākundī on the bank of the Gaṅgā. His father's name was Śrī



Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's deities: Śrī Madana-mohana (left), Śrī Gaur-Nitāī (right) and Vaṁśīvadana-śilā (in right front corner)

Caitanya dāsa. In his childhood he studied grammar and other subjects, and at that time he heard about the glory of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In Śrīkhaṇḍa, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya had *darśana* of Śrī Raghunandana and other devotees of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. This made him yearn to go to Śrī Kṣetra (Purī) to take *darśana* of the Lord and His associates.

After he began his journey he heard that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had left this world and entered His unmanifest pastimes. Overwhelmed with grief he fell unconscious. Finally, upon arriving in Purī he met Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, who taught him some verses from the *Bhāgavatam* and instructed him to go to Gauḍa-deśa. He later heard that Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita had also entered *aprakaṭa-līlā*, and he fainted. While returning to Bengal he received the news that Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu had entered *aprakaṭa-līlā*. Somehow or other he again returned to Navadvīpa, and from there went to Śrīkhaṇḍa and then Vṛndāvana, where he received Vaiṣṇava initiation from Śrī Gopala Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. Under Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī he studied with Śrī Narottama and Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu all *bhakti* literature,



The tree that grew from Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's tooth-stick

such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as well as the Gosvāmīs' *Ṣaṭ-sandarbha* and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

Then, on the order of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, he took all the books composed by the Gosvāmīs and continued on to Bengal with Śrī Narottama and Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu to preach. They carried



The tree under which Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura were sitting when Rāmacandra Kavirāja and his wedding party passed by

the books in large boxes loaded on bullock carts. At the Bengali border near Vanaviṣṇupura, King Vīrahamvīra, the leader of the local dacoits, thinking the cart to be filled with jewels, stole the books. Later, upon being highly impressed by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's

devotional brilliance, the King returned the books and accepted Vaiṣṇava initiation from him. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya then continued to Bengal with the books.

In Śrīkhaṇḍa, Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura arranged for Śrīnivāsa's marriage. Then Śrīnivāsa again went to Vṛndāvana, and after taking *darśana*, he returned to Bengal, where he began to propagate pure devotion. [Also see "Cākundī".]

Yaśaḍā

Yaśaḍā is situated near Cākadaha on the bank of the Gaṅgā in the district of Nadīyā. It is the *śrīpāṭa* of Śrī Jagadīśa, one of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associates. Śrī Jagadīśa Paṇḍita personally carried a deity of Śrī Jagannātha on his shoulders from Purī-dhāma to this place. At that time he took rest under a banyan tree here, which is still alive today.



Photo courtesy Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Yaśaḍā

Śrī Jagadīśa Paṇḍita's Jagannātha deity

[1] This pastime is narrated in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa*, Chapter 10: "Mukunda was unqualified to receive Mahāprabhu's *darśana* because he associated with impersonalistic *sampradāyas* and shared their sentiments. His mind and devotional service were unsteady. The Lord called him *khaḍa jāṭhiyā beṭā* because sometimes he held a straw (*khaḍa*) in his teeth and sometimes he beat Him with a stick (*jāṭhi*). To deny the supremacy of devotional service is like beating the Lord's body with a stick." Later, upon seeing Mukunda's love for Him, Śrīman Mahāprabhu forgave him.

[2] A *ṭhākura-bāḍī* is a house where an ancient deity, that is informally worshipped by a householder (not necessarily following the proper rules of a temple), gives *darśana* to the public.

Part 4

Prayers to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma



Śrī Navadvīpāṣṭakam

and

The Glories of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

Śrī Navadvīpāṣṭakam

(Eight verses in glorification of Śrī Navadvīpa)
by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī

śrī-gauḍa-deśe sura-dīrghikāyās
tīre 'ti-ramye pura-puṇya-mayyāḥ
lasantam ānanda-bhareṇa nityaṁ,
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (1)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which is eternally filled with supreme bliss and is splendidly situated on the sacred Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī's naturally beautiful bank in the land of Gauḍa.

yasmai paravyoma vadanti kecit
kecic ca goloka itīrayanti
vadanti vṛndāvanam eva taj-jñās
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (2)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which some refer to as Paravyoma-Vaikuṇṭha, and some as Goloka. Those who have realised the truth, however, know it as Śrī Vṛndāvana.

yaḥ sarva-dikṣu sphuritaiḥ suśītair
nānā-drumaiḥ sūpavanaiḥ parītaḥ
śrī-gaura-madhyāhna-vihāra-pātrais
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (3)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where a radiant, cool, gentle and fragrant breeze flows in all directions. This *dhāma* is beautifully decorated with varieties of green and blossoming trees, thus creating an auspicious atmosphere for Śrī Gaurasundara's midday pastimes.

śrī-svar-ṇadī yatra vihāra-bhūmiḥ
suvarṇa-sopāna-nibaddha-tīrā
vyāptormibhir gaura-vagāha-rūpais
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (4)

I perpetually meditate upon that Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma where, with the strong current of her waves, Śrī Bhagavatī-Bhāgīrathī dances to and fro, delighted in supreme bliss. Her banks are decorated with golden stairs.

mahānty anantāni gṛhāṇi yatra
sphuranti haimāni manoharāṇi
pratyālayaṁ yaṁ śrayate sadā śrīs
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (5)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where there are countless, beautifully effulgent golden palatial buildings, in which Śrī Lakṣmī-devī is personally present.

vidyā-dayā kṣānti-mukhaiḥ samstaiḥ
sadbhir guṇair yatra janāḥ prapannāḥ
samstūyamānā ṛṣi-deva-siddhais
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (6)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where each resident is ornamented by excellent qualities, such as knowledge, compassion, forgiveness and sacrifice. Even great sages, demigods and perfected beings glorify these residents.

yasyāntare miśra-purandarasya
sānanda-sāmyaika padaṁ nivāsaḥ
śrī-gaura-janmādika-līlayāḍhyas
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (7)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, in the centre of which Śrī Gaurasundara's birth pastime is performed, and

where Śrī Jagannātha Miśra's house, the only abode of transcendental happiness, is situated.

gauro bhraman yatra hariḥ sva-bhaktaiḥ
saṅkīrtana-prema-bhareṇa sarvam
nimajjayaty ullasad-unmadābdhau
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi (8)

I perpetually meditate upon Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, where Śrī Gaurahari loudly and lovingly performs *saṅkīrtana* with the devotees, thus submerging everyone in an ocean of the elevated *ujjvala-bhāva*.

etan navadvīpa-vicintanāḍhyaṁ
padyāṣṭakaṁ prīta-manāḥ paṭhed yaḥ
śrīmac-chacī-nandana-pāḍapadme
sudurlabhaṁ prema samāpnuyāt saḥ (9)

Those who affectionately recite this pure *padyāṣṭaka* to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma will achieve the rarely attained jewel of prema for Śrī Śacīnandana's lotus feet.

The Glories of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

(taken from Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī's *Śrī Navadvīpa-śatakam*, the hundred verses glorifying the land of Navadvīpa)

śrutiś chāndogyākhyā vadati paramaṁ brahma-purakaṁ
smṛtir vaikuṇṭhākhyaṁ vadati kila yad viṣṇu-sadanam
sita-dvīpañcānye virala-rasiko 'yaṁ vrajavanaṁ
navadvīpaṁ vande parama-sukhadaṁ taṁ cid-uditam

I offer my respects to the supremely blissful Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which is manifested by the *cit-śakti*, the transcendental potency. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* names it Parabrahmapura; the Smṛtis call it Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of Viṣṇu; other great personalities describe it as Śvetadvīpa; and the rare *rasika bhaktas* know it to be Śrī Vṛndāvana.

kadā navadvīpa-vanāntareṣv ahaṁ
paribhraman gaura-kiśoram adbhutam
mudā naṭantaṁ nitarāṁ sa-pārṣadaṁ
parisphuran vīkṣya patāmi mūrchhitaḥ

Oh, when, as I wander through Antardvīpa, the inner part of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, will such good fortune arise that I swoon in ecstasy upon seeing that most wonderful Śrī Gaurakiśora jubilantly dancing with His associates?

yat-sīmānam api spṛśen na nigamo dūrāt paraṁ lakṣyate
kiñcid gūḍhatayā yad eva paramānandotsavaikāvadhiḥ
yan mādhuryakalāpy avedi na śiva-svāyambhūvādyair ahaṁ
tac chīman-nava-khaṇḍa-dhāma-rasadaṁ vindāmi rādhā-pateḥ

When will I attain Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which easily bestows *prema* to Śrī Rādhikā-ramaṇa? Not even the Vedas can touch the boundary of this *dhāma*; they can only look in that direction from afar. There, a great festival of inexplicable supreme bliss in

its highest form secretely takes place eternally. Śiva, Svayambhū and other demigods are not acquainted with even a particle of its great sweetness.

svayaṁ patita-patrakāṇy amṛtavat kṣudhā bhakṣayan
tṛṣā tridivavandinī śuci-payo 'ñjalībhiḥ pivan
kadā madhura-rādhikā-ramaṇa-rāsa-keli-sthalīṁ
vilokya rasa-magna-dhīr adhivasāmi gaurāṭīm

Oh, when will I achieve such good fortune upon residing in Śrī Gaura's forest, Śrī Navadvīpa-kānana, that my hunger becomes allayed by the nectarean-like leaves that fall naturally, my thirst becomes quenched by drinking the tasty, cool water of the sacred Suradhunī (Gaṅgā), and I become submerged in *prema-rasa* upon beholding the place of Śrī Rādhikā-ramaṇa's sweet amorous pastimes?

sarva-sādhana-hīno 'pi
navadvīpaika-saṁśrayaḥ
yaḥ ko 'pi prāpruyād eva
rādhā-priya-rasotsavam

Although a person may be devoid of all kinds of spiritual practices, if he has not committed offences to the *dhāma* and takes unalloyed shelter of Śrīdhāma Navadvīpa, he will certainly enter the wonderful festival of *rāsa* of Śrī Vārṣabhānavī Rāsa-rāseśvarī Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

sā me na mātā sa ca me pitā na
sa me na bandhuḥ sa ca me sakhā na
sa me na mitraṁ sa ca me gurur na
yo me na rādhāvana-vāsam icchet

A father is not my father, a mother is not my mother, a relative is not my relative, a friend is not my friend, a well-wisher is not my

well-wisher, and a *guru* is not my *guru* if they are opposed to my residing in our precious Rādhāvana (Śrī Navadvīpa).

ārādhitaṁ nava-vanaṁ vraja-kānanaṁ te
nārādhitaṁ nava-vanaṁ vraja eva dūre
ārādhito dvija-suto vraja-nāgaras te
nārādhito dvija-suto na taveha kṛṣṇaḥ

If you have worshipped Śrī Navavana (Śrī Navadvīpa) you have worshipped Vraja-kānana (Śrī Vṛndāvana). If you have not worshipped Navadvīpa, however, Śrī Vraja-dhāma is far away from you. If you have worshipped Śrī Gaurasundara, the son of Śrī Jagannātha, you have worshipped Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the gallant of Vraja. But if you have not worshipped the son of Miśra, then, in this world, you have not worshipped Gopendra-nandana.

sakala-vibhava-sāraṁ sarva-dharmaika-sāraṁ
sakala-bhajana-sāraṁ sakala-siddhayaika-sāram
sakala-mahima-sāraṁ vastu khaṇḍe navākhye
sakala-madhurimāmbho-rāśi-sāraṁ vihāraḥ

To wander through the nine islands of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma is the essence of all opulences, the essence of all religious principles, the essence of all *bhajana*, the essence of all perfections, the essence of all glories and the essence of all kinds of oceans of sweetness.

saṁsāra-sindhu-taraṇe hṛdayaṁ yadi syāt
saṁkīrttanāmṛta-rase ramate manaś cet
premāmbudhau viharaṇe yadi citta-vṛttir
māyāpurākhya-nagare vasatiṁ kurusva

If you cherish the desire in your heart to cross the ocean of material existence, if you have the desire to taste the sweet nectar of the holy name, if you have an intent eagerness to play

in the ocean of *prema*, you must certainly reside in the city of Śrī Māyāpura.

kadā navadvīpa-vanāntareśv ahaṁ
paribhraman saikata-pūrṇa-catvare
harīti rāmeti harīti kīrtayan
vilokya gauraṁ prapātāmi vihvalaḥ

Oh, when will I achieve such great fortune that, while wandering the paths filled with shining white sand in the beautiful forests of Śrī Navadvīpa reciting "Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Rāma" in a sweet voice, I will behold Śrī Gauracandra and fall to the ground overwhelmed by *prema*?

Glossary & Index of People

Glossary

A

Ācamana – a ritual of purification in which one sips water from the palm of the right hand and simultaneously chants names of the Supreme Lord.

Ācārya – spiritual preceptor, or one who teaches by example.

Advaitavāda – the doctrine of non-dualism, monism; the doctrine that emphasises the absolute oneness of the living entities with God.

Advaitavādī – one who advocates the doctrine of monism (see **Advaitavāda**).

Aparādha (aparādhī) – an offence committed against the holy name, Vaiṣṇavas, the spiritual master, the scriptures, holy places or the deity (one who commits an offence).

Aprakaṭa-līlā – unmanifest pastimes; when a transcendental personality leaves this material world he enters his unmanifest pastimes, which are not seen by material eyes.

Āratī – the ceremony of offering a deity articles of worship, such as incense, lamp, flowers and fan, accompanied by the chanting of devotional hymns.

Āśrama – a residential place established to facilitate spiritual practices.

Aṣṭa-sāttvika-bhāvas – eight symptoms of spiritual ecstasy arising exclusively from unalloyed goodness untainted by material existence (*viśuddha-sattva*).

Avadhūta – an ascetic who often transgresses the rules governing ordinary social conduct.

B

Bābājī – a person who is absorbed in meditation, penance and austerity; a renounced order beyond *sannyāsa*.

Bhagavān – the Supreme Lord; the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Bhajana – (1) activities performed with the consciousness of being a servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; (2) in a general sense *bhajana* refers to the performance of spiritual practices, especially hearing, chanting and meditating upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities and pastimes.

Bhajana-kuṭī – a place where a devotee performs his *bhajana*.

Bhakti – loving devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Bhakti-tattva – the essential reality (*tattva*) of devotional service (*bhakti*).

Bhāva-bhakti – the initial stage of perfection in devotion.

Bhāvuka – a devotee at the stage of *bhāva*, who is thus able to taste spiritual sentiments.

Brahmacārī – celibate student; the first of the four stages of life (*āśramas*).

Brahman – the impersonal all-pervading feature of the Lord, which is devoid of attributes and qualities. Depending on the context, this may sometimes refer to the Supreme Brahman, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the source of Brahman.

Brāhmaṇa – the highest of the four *varṇas*, or castes, in the *varṇāśrama* system; a priest or teacher.

C

Caitanya-līlā – the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Cakra – the disc weapon of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Cāmara – a yak-tail fan used in the service of the Lord.

D

Darśana – seeing, visiting or beholding (especially in regard to a deity, a sacred place or an exalted Vaiṣṇava).

Dhāma – a holy place of pilgrimage; the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, where He appears and enacts His transcendental pastimes.

Dharma – principles of religious conduct; religiosity; righteous prescription.

Dharmaśālā – a building found at a holy place providing inexpensive or free lodging to pilgrims.

Digvijayī-paṇḍita – a learned scholar who travels all over the world challenging other scholars in philosophy, logic and other fields of knowledge with the desire to conquer them.

Dīkṣā – receiving initiation from a spiritual master.

Dvāpara-yuga – the third of the four ages described in the Vedas. (Also see **Yuga**.)

E

Ekādaśī – the eleventh day of the waxing or waning moon, on which devotees fast from grains, beans and certain other foodstuffs, and increase their remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His associates.

G

Gauḍīya-maṭha – a temple belonging to the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* with residential quarters for devotees; a monastery.

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava – (1) any Vaiṣṇava who follows the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; (2) a Vaiṣṇava born in Bengal.

Gandharvas – the celestial demigod dancers, singers and musicians of the heavenly planets.

Ghāṭa – bathing place; steps or landing-stage that lead down to a holy river, lake or pond.
Gopī – one of the young cowherd maidens of Vraja headed by Śrīmatī Rādhikā who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of amorous love.
Guru, Gurudeva – spiritual master.

H

Hari-kathā – narrations of the holy name, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Hari.
Harināma – the chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names. It refers to the practice of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* softly to oneself on a strand of *tulasī* beads. When joined with the word *saṅkīrtana* it refers to the congregational chanting of the *mahā-mantra*.

J

Jagad-guru – the spiritual master of the entire Universe.
Jīva – the eternal, spiritual living entity who, in the conditioned state of material existence, assumes a material body in any of the 8,4 million species of life.
Jñāna – (1) knowledge; (2) knowledge leading to impersonal liberation.

K

Kali-yuga – the present age of quarrel and hypocrisy that began five thousand years ago. (Also see **Yuga**.)
Kalpa – one day in the life of Brahmā, which is equal to 4,320 million years.
Karatālas – hand cymbals used in the performance of devotional songs.
Karma – (1) pious activities leading to material gain in this

world or in the heavenly planets after death, (2) fate; former acts leading to inevitable results.

Kīrtana – one of the nine most important limbs of *bhakti*, consisting of either (1) congregational singing of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names, sometimes accompanied by music, (2) loud individual chanting of the holy name, or (3) oral descriptions of the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names, forms, qualities, associates and pastimes.

Kṛṣṇa – the original Supreme Lord, who is the origin of all expansions.

Kṛṣṇa-kathā – (see **Hari-kathā**).

Kṛṣṇa-prema – pure love for Kṛṣṇa (see **Prema**).

Kṛṣṇa-līlā – the divine pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa-nāma – the holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kuṇḍa – a pond or small lake, often with steps leading to the water.

M

Mahā-bhāgavata – a first-class devotee of the Supreme Lord.

Mahābhāva – the highest stage of (*prema*), divine, transcendental love.

Mahā-mantra – the great *mantra* composed of the principal names of the Supreme Lord in their vocative forms: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Mahāmāyā – the Supreme Lord's external potency, which influences the living entities to accept the false egoism of being independent enjoyers of this material world.

Mahanta – the superior of a temple.

Mahā-prasāda – (see **Prasāda**).

Mantra – (*man* – mind; *tra* – deliverance) a spiritual sound vibration that delivers the mind from its material conditioning

and illusion when repeated over and over; a Vedic hymn, prayer or chant.

Maṭha – a temple of the Lord with living quarters for *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs*; a monastery.

Mṛdaṅga – a double-headed clay drum which is used in the performance of devotional songs.

N

Nāma – the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, chanted by devotees as the main limb of the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*.

Nāma-aparādha – offensive chanting of the holy name.

Nāma-haṭṭa – a system of preaching where devotees hold public preaching programmes in their homes.

Niśānta-līlā – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes that take place daily at the end of the night just prior to dawn.

Niṣkiñcana – free from all material possessions; entirely destitute; a renunciant.

P

Paṇḍita – a learned scholar.

Paramahaṁsa – a topmost, God-realised, swan-like devotee of the Supreme Lord.

Parikramā – circumambulation; the path that encircles a sacred tract of land such as Vṛndāvana or Vraja; the covered path round a temple.

Patita-pāvanī – the one who purifies fallen and sinful people (a title of the Gaṅgā).

Phālguna – one of the months corresponding to February–March.

Prāṇa-sakhī – one of the five kinds of *sakhīs*.

Prasāda – (literally means "mercy") especially refers to the

remnants of food offered to the deity.

Prema – love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa that is extremely concentrated, that completely melts the heart, and that gives rise to a deep sense of *mamatā*, possessiveness, in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Prema-bhakti – pure love of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the highest perfectional stage in the progressive development of pure devotional service.

Prema-dharma – eternal religion of pure, transcendental loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Pujārī – the priest who performs the worship of the deity.

Pūrṇimā – the full-moon.

Puṣpa-samādhi – a *samādhi* established using flowers worn by a departed Vaiṣṇava before his body is embalmed and put into *samādhi* (see **Samādhi**).

R

Rādhikā – the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Rāma-līlā – the divine pastimes of Śrī Rāma.

Rasa – the spiritual transformation of the heart that takes place when the perfectional state of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, known as *rati*, is converted into "liquid" emotions by combining with various types of transcendental ecstasies; transcendental mellows.

Rāsa-līlā – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dance with His most confidential servitors, the cowherd maidens of Vraja, in which they exchange pure spiritual love.

Rasika – one who is expert at relishing *rasa*.

Rudras – eleven expansions of Lord Śiva.

S

Sādhana – the method one adopts in order to obtain a specific goal is called *sādhana*. The *sādhana* of *bhakti* refers to

spiritual practices such as hearing, chanting and so on.

Sādhaka – one who performs *sādhana*, following a spiritual discipline to achieve a specific goal.

Sakhā – a male friend, companion or attendant.

Sakhī – a female friend, companion or attendant.

Samādhi – (1) meditation of deep trance upon either the Supersoul or Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweet pastimes; (2) the tomb in which a pure Vaiṣṇava's body is placed after his departure from this world.

Sampradāya – a line of disciplic succession; the authentic, unadulterated conception of Godhead which is transmitted from one spiritual master to another; a particular system of religious teaching.

Saṅkīrtana – congregational chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.

Sannyāsa – the fourth *āśrama*, or stage of life, in the *varṇāśrama* system; renounced, ascetic life.

Sannyāsī – a member of the renounced order.

Śāstra – scripture; especially the Vedic scriptures.

Satya-yuga – the first of the four ages described in the Vedas. (Also see **Yuga**.)

Siddha-mahāpuruṣa – (1) one who has attained the perfectional stage of *bhakti* in this life, and who thus incessantly tastes the bliss of *prema*, being completely unacquainted with impediments or material distress; (2) a liberated soul who resides in the spiritual world, and who accompanies the Supreme Lord to the material world to assist in His pastimes.

Siddhas – demigods from Siddhaloka, a heavenly planet whose inhabitants possess all mystic powers.

Śilā, Śāligrāma-śilā – the worshipful deity of the Lord in the form of a stone.

Smṛti – the body of Vedic literature that is remembered.

Śrīpāṭa – an eminent devotee's place of residence and *bhajana*.
Śruti – infallible knowledge that was received by Brahmā or by the great sages in the beginning of creation and that descended in disciplic succession from them.
Stambha – a pillar.
Śūdra – the lowest of the four *varṇas*, or castes, in the *varṇāśrama* system; artisans and labourers.

T

Tapasyā – austerities.
Tilaka – clay markings worn on the forehead and other parts of the body by a Vaiṣṇava that signify he is a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu, and consecrates his body as the Lord's temple; a piece of clay used to mark the body.
Tīrtha – holy place, place of pilgrimage.
Tretā-yuga – the second of the four ages described in the Vedas. (Also see **Yuga**.)
Tridaṇḍi-sannyāsi, tridaṇḍi-svāmī – member of the renounced order of life who accepts the personal nature of the Absolute Truth.
Tulasī – a sacred plant whose leaves and blossoms are used by Vaiṣṇavas in the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

U

Unnatojjvala-rasa – the most elevated, resplendent transcendental mellow of amorous love.

V

Vaiṣṇava – literally means "one whose nature is of Viṣṇu" in other words, "one in whose heart and mind only Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa resides". A devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

Veda – the four primary books of knowledge compiled by Śrīla Vyāsadeva.

Vedānta – conclusion of Vedic knowledge.

Vraja-līlā – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja.

Vraja-prema – pure love of Kṛṣṇa in the mood of the inhabitants of Vraja.

Vyāsa-pūjā – the spiritual master is a representative of Śrīla Vyāsadeva. Therefore, according to the Vedic system, the disciples perform the ceremony called *vyāsa-pūjā* on the spiritual master's birthday.

Y

Yoga – a path of developing mystic powers.

Yogamāyā – the internal potency of the Lord that engages in arranging and enhancing all His pastimes.

Yojana – a traditional Indian measure of distance equal to about eight miles.

Yuga – one of the four ages described in the Vedas: Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga and Kali-yuga. The duration of each *yuga* is said to be respectively 1,728,000; 1,296,000; 864,000; and 432,000 years. The descending numbers represent a corresponding physical and moral deterioration of mankind in each age.

Z

Zamindar – landlord; person responsible for ground rents to the government.

Index of People

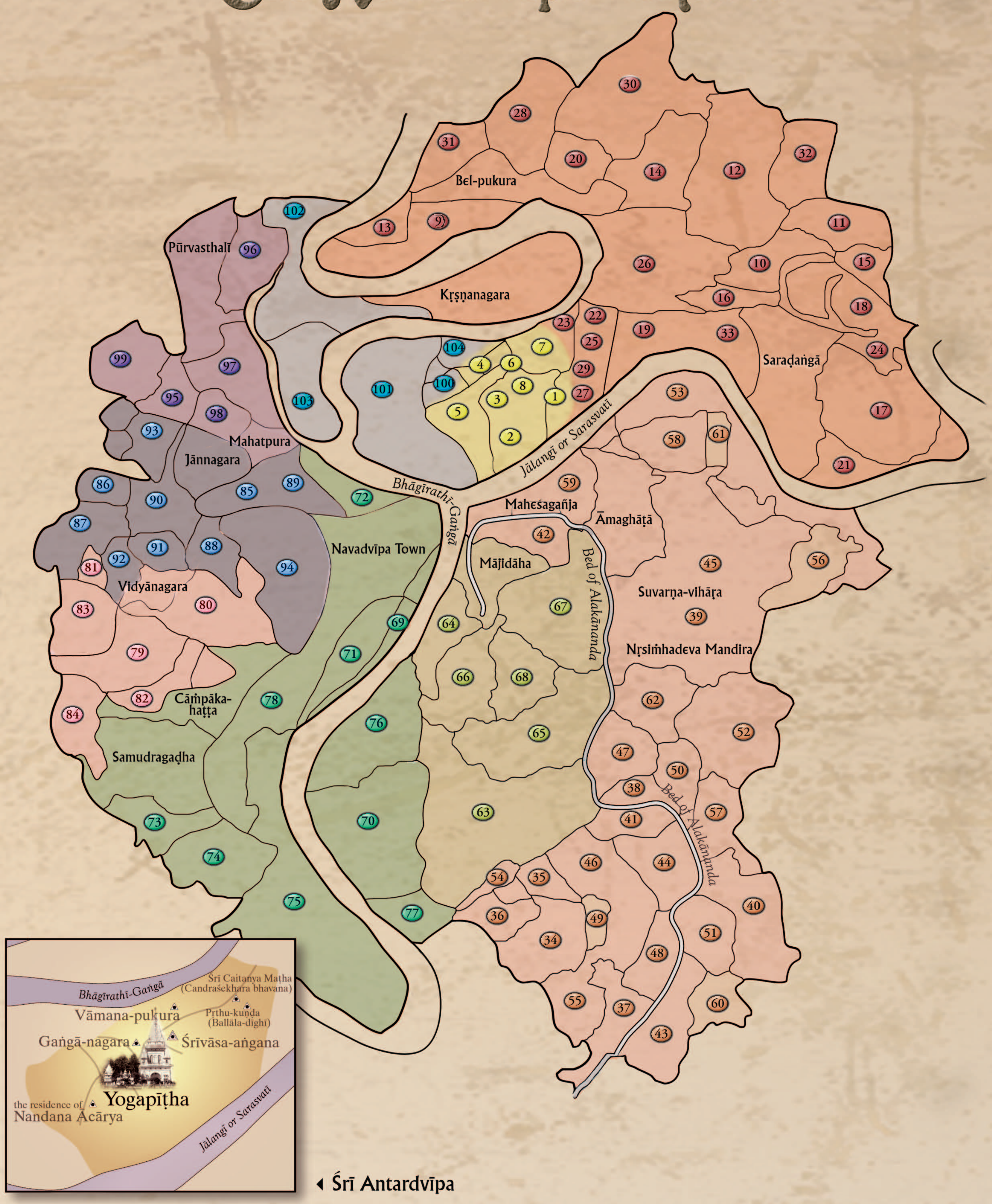
Note: When information about a personality is given in detail, the page number is in plain text. When a personality is just mentioned, the page number given is in small italics.

P

R

S

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma



The Islands of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

Śrī Antardvīpa
1. Ballala-dīghī
2. Carballāla-dīghī
3. Dīpakā-maṭha
4. Gaṅgā-nagara
5. Jalkara Damdam
6. Kājīpāḍā
7. Vāmana-pukura
8. Yogapīṭha

Śrī Sīmantadvīpa
- Bel-pukura
9. Car-vehālā
10. Caugachā
11. Daluīmālā
12. Dhuvullyā
13. Durgāvāsa
14. Dvīpa-cāṅda-pura
15. Haṁsaḍaṅgā
16. Kāṭhaliya-maṭha
- Kṛṣṇanagara or Kharīyāṭī
17. Māyākola
18. Mediyā or Vanagrāma
19. Mullāpāḍā
20. Pālitā
21. Pāramediyā
22. Rājapura
23. Saharaḍāṅgā
24. Sāheva-nagara
25. Saṅkhavaṇikapallī
- Saraḍāṅgā or Vāhādurapura
26. Sonadāṅgā
27. Śrīdhara-aṅgana
28. Sujāna-pura
29. Tantuvāryapallī
30. Tātalā
31. Valāī-nagara or Vālāḍāṅgā
32. Velagāng
33. Viṣṇu-nagara

Śrī Godrumadvīpa
- Āmaghāṭā
34. Boyālīyā-dahara
35. Cak-sājahlapura
36. Caka-pānaśīlā
37. Ciyāvalī
38. Cuciyā
39. Depāḍā
40. Digha-nagara
41. Ektārapura
42. Gādīgāchā
43. Goyālapāḍā
44. Hājarāpotā
45. Harīśapura
46. Joyāniyā
47. Kūṅdapāḍā
48. Kursī
- Maheśagañja
49. Mālīpotā
50. Manipotā
- Nṛsiṁhadeva Mandira
51. Polagāchī
52. Rāutaḍā
53. Ruī-pukura (long area)
54. Sajālpura
55. Saradaṅgā
56. Simulatalā
57. Siṅghadaṅgā
- Suvarṇa-vihāra
58. Śyāma-nagara
59. Tiyorakhālī
60. Vāliyāḍāṅgā
61. Virijā
62. Viṣṇupura

Śrī Madhyadvīpa
63. Bhaluka
64. Brahma-nagara or Vriṭṭi
- Mājidāha
65. Pānaśilā
66. Simūlagāchī
67. Usidapura
68. Vāmana-pāḍā

Śrī Koladvīpa
69. Āmādakola
- Campaka-haṭṭa
70. Dhopādi Vanakara
71. Gādakhalīra
72. Gaṅgā-prasāda
73. Jālāhāṭī
74. Jāluidāṅgā
75. Mahī-suṇḍā
- Navadvīpa Town
76. Pāramediyā
- Samudragaḍha
77. Satkuliyā or Dhopādi
78. Tegharī or Tegharīkola

Śrī Ṛtudvīpa
79. Dakṣiṇavātī or Kṛṣṇavāṭī
80. Kovalā
81. Kovalā-caka
82. Rātupura
83. Sāpura
84. Sīmajulī
87. Vidyānagara

Śrī Jahnudvīpa
85. Bābalarī Devāna-gañja
86. Bel-pukura
87. Bhātaśālā
88. Cānapura
- Jānnagara
89. Kekaḍā Māṅṭha,
- (Rāmacandrapura)
90. Maṅgalapura
91. Rājādharapura
92. Rājāpura
93. Sāsuṇtrī
94. Śrī Rāmapura

Śrī Modadrumadvīpa
95. Bhāṇḍārakulā
96. Cupī
97. Ekatālā
- Mahatpura
98. Māugāchī
99. Pāruliyā
- Pūrvavasthalī

Śrī Rudradvīpa
100. Bhāruī-ḍāṅgā
101. Caranidayā and Rudrapāḍā
102. Indrakapura
103. Śaṅkarapura
104. Ṭoṭā

*appears directly on the map

Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala – the pastime-place of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates

